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CHAPTERS ON SPANISH LITERATURE

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CHAPTERS ON SPANISH LITERATURE

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BY

JAMES FITZMAURICE-KELLY

FELLOW OF THE BRITISH ACADEMY
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MEDALLIST OF THE HISPANIC SOCIETY OF AMERICA, ETC.

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TO

MY FELLOW-MEMBERS

OF

THE HISPANIC SOCIETY OF AMERICA

THESE LECTURES

ARE CORDIALLY DEDICATED

PREFACE

Last summer the Trustees of the Hispanic Society of America did me the honour to invite me to give a course of lectures on Spanish literature in the United States, and almost at the same time an invitation to lecture on the same subject reached me from the Provost of University College, London. The chapters contained in the present volume are the result. The lectures on the Cid, Cervantes, Lope de Vega, Calderón, and Modern Spanish Novelists were delivered during the autumn and winter of 1907 at the University of Columbia; some of these were repeated at Cornell, Harvard, Johns Hopkins, Pennsylvania, and Yale Universities; some at Bryn Mawr, Mount Holyoke, and Smith's College (Northampton, Massachusetts); and the whole series was given this spring at University College, London.

Owing to the limited amount of time available for each lecture, it became necessary to omit a few paragraphs here and there in delivery. These are now restored. With the exception of the chapter on the Archpriest of Hita (part of which has been recast), all the lectures are printed substantially as they were written. Occasional references have been added in the form of notes.

In addresses of this kind some repetition of 'you' and 'I' is almost unavoidable. It has, however, been thought better to retain the conversational character of the lectures, and it is hoped that the use of the objectionable first personal pronoun does not degenerate into abuse.

Lastly, it is a duty and pleasure to thank my friendly audiences in America and England for the indulgence with which they listened to these discourses.

JAMES FITZMAURICE-KELLY.

KNEIPPBADEN: *vid* NORRKÖPING,
May 1, 1908.

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CHAPTER I

THE CID

Just as a portrait discloses the artist's opinion of his sitter, so the choice of a hero is an involuntary piece of self-revelation. As man fashions his idols in his own image, we are in a fair way to understand him, if we know what he admires: and, as it is with individual units, so is it with races. National heroes symbolise the ambitions, the foibles, the general temper and radical qualities of those who have set them up as exemplars. But there are two sides to every character, and Spain has two national heroes known all the world over: the practical Cid and the idealistic Don Quixote, one of them an historical figure, and the other the child of a great man's fancy. Perhaps to the majority of mankind the offspring of Cervantes's poetic imagination is more vividly present than the authentic warrior who headed many a desperate charge. It is the singular privilege of genius to substitute its own intense conceptions for the unromantic facts, and to create out of nothing beings that seem more vital than men of flesh and blood. Don Quixote has become a part of the visible universe, while most of us behold the Cid, not as he really was, but as Corneille portrayed him more than five centuries after his death. It may not be amiss to bring him back to earth by recalling the ascertainable incidents in his adventurous career.

So marked are the differences between the Cid of history and the Cid of legend that, early in the nineteenth century

his very existence was called in question by the sceptical Jesuit Masdeu, an historian who delighted in paradox. Masdeu's doubts were reiterated by Samuel Dunham in his *History of Spain and Portugal*, and by Dunham's translator, Antonio María de Alcalá Galiano, a writer of repute in his own day. Alcalá Galiano's incredulity caused him some personal inconvenience, for—as his kinsman, the celebrated novelist Juan Valera, records—he was threatened with an action at law by a Spanish gentleman who piqued himself on his descent from the Cid, and was not disposed to see his alleged ancestor put aside as a fabulous creature like the Phœnix. These negations, more or less sophistical, are the follies of the learned, and they have their match in the assertions of another school that sought to reconcile divergent views by assuming the existence of two Cids, each with a wife called Jimena, and each with a war-horse called Babieca. This generous process of duplicating everybody and everything has not found favour. Cervantes expresses his view through the canon in *Don Quixote* :—'That there was a Cid, as well as a Bernardo del Carpio, is beyond doubt; but that they did the deeds which they are said to have done, I take to be very doubtful.' Few of us would care to be so affirmative as the canon with respect to Bernardo del Carpio, but he is perfectly right as regards the Cid.

It is certain that the Cid existed in the flesh. He was the son of Diego Lainez, a soldier who fought in the Navarrese campaign. Pérez de Guzmán, in the *Loores de los claros varones de España*, says that the Cid was born at Río de Ovierna :—

> Este varón tan notable
> en Río de Ovierna[1] nasció.

[1] 'Nierva' in Eugenio de Ochoa, *Rimas inéditas* (Paris, 1851), p. 305.

But the usual version is that the Cid was born at Bivar near Burgos, about the year 1040, and thence took his territorial designation. To contemporaries he was first of all known simply as Rodrigo (or Ruy) Díaz de Bivar—Roderick, son of James, of Bivar; and later, from his prowess in single combat, as the *Campeador* (the Champion or Challenger). What was probably his earliest feat of this kind, the overthrow of a Navarrese knight, is recorded in a copy of rudely rhymed Latin verses, apparently the most ancient of the poems which were to commemorate the Cid's exploits:—

Eia! laetando, populi catervae,
Campi-doctoris hoc carmen audite!
Magis qui eius freti estis ope,
Cuncti venite!

Nobiliori de genere ortus,
Quod in Castella non est illo maius:
Hispalis novit et Iberum litus
Quis Rodericus.

Hoc fuit primum singulare bellum,
Cum adolescens devicit Navarrum:
Hinc Campi-doctor dictus est maiorum
Ore virorum.

The epithet gained at this early period clung to him through life: it is applied to him even by his enemies. It is curious to find that the Arab chroniclers constantly speak of him as Al-kambeyator, but never as the Cid—a word which is usually said to derive from the Arabic *Sidi* (=My Lord). This circumstance makes it doubtful whether he was widely known as the Cid during his own lifetime. There is, indeed, a pleasing legend to the effect that the King of Castile, on hearing Ruy Díaz de Bivar addressed as *Sidi* by Arab prisoners of war, decreed that the successful

soldier should henceforth be known by that name. But there is no evidence to support this story, and it is rather too picturesque to be plausible. It seems more likely that Ruy Díaz de Bivar was first addressed as *Sidi* by Arabs who served under him or by the Arab population of Valencia which he conquered towards the end of his career, that the phrase was taken up by his Christian troops, and that it was not generally current among Spaniards till after his death. That he soon afterwards became widely known as 'the Cid' or 'my Cid' is apparent from a line in the rhymed Latin chronicle of the siege of Almería, written some fifty years later:—

Ipse Rodericus, mio Cid semper vocatus.

But we need not discuss these minutiæ further. Let us record the fact that Ruy Díaz de Bivar is known as the Cid Campeador, and pass on to his historical achievements. At the age of twenty-five he was appointed *alférez* (standard-bearer) to Sancho II. of Castile, a predatory monarch who drove his brother Alfonso from León and his brother García from Galicia, and annexed their kingdoms. Both campaigns gave the Cid opportunities of distinction, and he became the most conspicuous personage in Castile after the murder of Sancho II. by Bellido Dolfos at Zamora in 1072:—

¡ Rey don Sancho, rey don Sancho, no digas que no te aviso
que de dentro de Zamora un alevoso ha salido !
llámase Vellido Dolfos, hijo de Dolfos Vellido,
cuatro traiciones ha hecho, y con esta serán cinco.
Si gran traidor fue el padre, mayor traidor es el hijo.—
Gritos dan en el real: ¡ A don Sancho han mal herido:
muerto le ha Vellido Dolfos, gran traición ha cometido !

The Castilians were in a difficult position: the assassination of Sancho II. left them without a candidate for the

vacant thrones of Castile and León. The Cid was not eligible; for, though of good family, he was not of royal—nor even of illustrious—descent. The sole legitimate claimant was the dethroned Alfonso, and there was nothing for it but to offer him both crowns. It is alleged that the exasperated Castilians found a salve for their wounded pride by inflicting a signal humiliation on the Leonese prince whom they invited to rule over them. According to tradition, Alfonso was compelled to swear that he had no complicity in Sancho's death, and this oath was publicly administered to him by the Cid and eleven other Castilian representatives in the church of Santa Gadea at Burgos. This story reaches us in ancient *romances*, and Hartzenbusch has given it a further lease of life by dramatising it in *La Jura en Santa Gadea*. There may be some basis for it, and any one may believe it who can. There is, however, no positive proof that any such incident took place, and the tale reads rather like a later invention, fabricated to account for the bad blood made subsequently between the king and his formidable subject. Picturesque stories concerning historical personages are always 'suspect,' and are generally untrue. As there was no pretender in the field, why should Alfonso submit to insulting conditions? Is it not simpler to suppose that he regarded the Cid with natural suspicion as the man mainly responsible for his expulsion from León, and that the Leonese nobles were careful to keep this resentful memory alive? Now, as in the time of Fernán González:—

Castellanos y leoneses tienen malas intenciones.

Is it not intrinsically probable that the Cid, like a true Castilian, smarted under the Leonese supremacy; that his allegiance was from the outset reluctant and half-hearted; and that he scarcely troubled to conceal his ultimate design

of carving out for himself a semi-independent principality with the help of his famous sword Colada? However this may be, king and subject were, for the moment, mutually indispensable. Neither could afford an absolute breach at this stage; both were deep dissemblers; and on July 19, 1074, Alfonso VI. gave his cousin Jimena in marriage to the Cid. The wedding contract has been preserved—a prosaic document providing for the due disposition of property on the death of one of the contracting parties.

After this diplomatic marriage the Cid vanishes for some time into the dense obscurity of domestic bliss, emerging again into the light of history as defeating the Emir of Granada, and then as being charged with malversation. The details are by no means clear. What is clear is that the Cid was exiled about 1081, that he entered the service of Al-muktadir, Emir of Saragossa, and that he continued in the pay of the Emir's successors—his son Al-mutamen, and his grandson Al-mustain. Henceforward we have a relatively full account of the Cid's exploits. He defeated the combined forces of the King of Aragón, the Count of Barcelona and their Mohammedan allies at Almenara near Lérida; he routed the King of Aragón once more, this second battle being fought on the banks of the Ebro; he played fast-and-loose with Alfonso VI., was reconciled to his former master, quarrelled, and was again banished. His possessions were confiscated. But confiscation is a game at which subjects can play as well as kings, and the Cid was in a position to recoup his losses. By this time he had gathered round him a motley host of raiders, men of diverse creeds eager for any enterprise that offered chances of plunder. Fortune was now about to furnish him with a great opportunity. On the surrender of Toledo to Alfonso VI. in 1085 it was agreed that Yahya Al-kadir, the

defeated Emir, should receive Valencia by way of compensation; and he was imposed on the restive inhabitants by a force under the Cid's nephew, Alvar Fáñez Minaya. In ordinary circumstances the intruder might have held his own; but the incursion of the African Almoravides, the Jansenists of Mohammedanism, abruptly changed the political aspect. It soon became clear that the gains of the Reconquest were in jeopardy, and that Alfonso VI. must concentrate his army for a momentous struggle.

He might fairly plead that he had kept his bargain by installing the ex-Emir of Toledo at Valencia, and that his own kingdom was now at stake. He had no sooner recalled Alvar Fáñez and his troops than the Valencians revolted, and Al-kadir besought Al-mustain to come over and help him. The inducements offered were considerable. But Al-mustain was a mere figurehead at Saragossa; effective aid could come only from his lieutenant, the Cid: the two feigned acceptance of Al-kadir's proposals, but secretly agreed to oust him and to divide the spoil. The relief expedition was commanded by the Cid in Al-mustain's name. It was a post after his own heart. Valencia was then, as it is now, 'the orchard of Spain,' and the Cid was in no hurry to reach the capital. He ravaged the outlying districts of the fertile province, levied forced contributions, or induced the inhabitants to pay blackmail to escape his forays. He advanced cautiously, fortifying his position, and scattering delusive promises as he went along. He assured Alfonso VI. that he was working in the interest of Castile, and he assured Al-mustain that he was working in the interest of Saragossa; he encouraged Al-kadir to put down the Valencian rebels, and he encouraged the rebels to throw off Al-kadir's authority. A master of dissimulation, resolved to make Valencia his own, he successfully deceived

all parties till the murder of Al-kadir by Ibn-Jehaf, and the threatened advance of the Almoravides, forced him to drop the mask. Failing to carry the city of Valencia by storm, the Cid reduced it by starvation, and in June 1094 the Valencians surrendered on generous conditions. These conditions were flagrantly violated. Ibn-Jehaf was tortured till he revealed where his treasure was hidden; he was finally burned alive, his chief supporters shared his fate, and the Mohammedan population was given its choice between banishment and something like slavery.

In all but name the Cid was now a king, and he was careful to strengthen his hold on his prize. By taking a census of Christians, and by forbidding them to leave the city, he kept his most trustworthy troops together; and he promoted military efficiency as well as religion by founding a bishopric to which he nominated Jerónimo, the French prelate mentioned in the *Poema del Cid*, and as valiant a fighter as Archbishop Turpin in the *Chanson de Roland*:—

> Tels curunez ne cantat unkes messe,
> Ki de sun cors feïst tantes proeces.

The Cid came out of his trenches to rout the Almoravides at Quarte and in the valley of Alcoy; he extended his conquests to Murviedro, and formed an independent alliance with the King of Aragón. And, if the report of Ibn-Bassam, the Arab chronicler, be true, he had more vaulting ambitions: in a gust of exaltation, the Cid—so we are told—was heard to say that, as the first Roderick had lost Spain, a second Roderick might be destined to win it back. Ibn-Bassam writes in good faith, but he is a rhetorician, and moreover, in this case, he gives the story at second-hand. It is difficult to believe that a clear-headed, practical man like the Cid, who had recently found it hard enough to

seize a single province, can have talked in this wild way about winning back all Spain. If he did, his judgment was greatly at fault: the Reconquest was not completed till four centuries later, and little more was done towards furthering it during the Cid's last days. His lieutenant, Alvar Fáñez, was beaten at Cuenca: the Almoravides, flushed with victory, again defeated the Cid's picked troops at Alcira. The Cid was not present on the field, but the mortification was too much for him: he died—'of grief and fury,' so the Arab historians state—in July 1099. Supported by Alvar Fáñez and Bishop Jerónimo, Jimena held out for another two years: then she retreated northwards, after setting fire to the city. Valencia—the real 'Valencia del Cid'—ceased to exist. The Christians marched out by the light of the flaming walls; the Cid's embalmed body was mounted for the last time on Babieca (a horse as famous as Roland's Veillantif), and was taken to San Pedro de Cardeña. There you may still see what was his tomb, with this inscription on it:—

> Belliger, invictus, famosus marte triumphis,
> Clauditur hoc tumulo magnus Didaci Rodericus.

But his body, after many vicissitudes, now rests in the unimposing town hall of Burgos.

This is the Cid Campeador as he appears in Ibn-Bassam's *Dhakira*, written ten years after the Cid's death, and in the anonymous *Gesta Ruderici Campidocti* which dates from between 1140 and 1170. The authors write from opposite points of view, and are not critical, but they are trustworthy in essentials, and a statement made by both may usually be taken as a fact, or as a close approximation to fact. The Cid, as you perceive, is far from being irreproachable. He has all the qualities, and therefore all the defects, of a mediæval soldier of fortune: he was brave, mercenary, per-

fidious and cruel. How, then, are we to account for his position as a national hero? In the first place, we must avoid the error of judging him by modern standards, and in the second place, we must bear in mind that almost all we learn of his later years—the best known period of his life—comes to us from enemies whose prejudices may have led them unconsciously to darken the shadows in the portrait. It is a shock to discover that the man who symbolises the spirit of Spanish patriotism was a border chief in the pay of the highest bidder; it is a greater shock to find that the man who figures as the type of knightly orthodoxy fought for the Mohammedans against the Christians. We must part with our simple-minded illusions, and admit that Pius v. was right in turning a deaf ear when Philip II. suggested (so it is said) the canonisation of the Cid. All heroes are apt to lose their glamour when dragged from the twilight of tradition and poetry into the fierce blaze of fact and history. The Cid is no exception. Renan sums up against him with gay severity. 'Tout ce qu'il fut, il le dut aux ennemis de sa patrie, même le nom sous lequel il est resté dans l'histoire. Le représentant idéal de l'honneur espagnol était un *condottiere*, combattant tantôt pour le Christ, tantôt pour Mahomet. Le représentant idéal de l'amour n'a peut-être jamais aimé. Encore une idole qui tombe sous les coups de l'impitoyable critique!'

Yet, if it were worth while, a case might be made for the Cid without recourse to sophistry. It is enough to say that he acted as all other leaders acted in his age and for long afterwards. He was anything but a saint: if he had been a saint, he would never have become the idol of a nation. It has been thought that he had some consciousness of a providential mission, but this is perhaps a hasty generalisation based upon Ibn-Bassam's story of his having said that a second

Roderick might reconquer Spain. This theory ascribes to him more elevation of character and more political foresight than we can suppose him to have possessed. The supremacy of Castile was not an accepted political ideal till it was on the point of establishment, and this takes us forward, nearly a century and a half, to the reign of St. Ferdinand. The Cid was no idealist: he lived wholly in the present. The land of visions was never thrown open to him; he had no touch of Jeanne d'Arc's mystical temperament; his aims were immediate, concrete, personal. His popularity was due, first of all, to his conspicuous and inspiring valour; due to the fact that the last and most celebrated of his expeditions, though undertaken primarily for his own profit, incidentally helped the cause of national unity by wresting a province from the Mohammedans; due to the instinctive feeling that he represented more or less faithfully the interests of Castile as against those of León—a feeling which found frank expression five centuries later in the *Romancero general*:—

> Soy Rodrigo de Vivar,
> castellano á las derechas.

And, no doubt, the man bore a stamp of self-confident greatness which awed his foes and fired the imagination of his countrymen. As posterity is apt to condone the crimes by which it gains, it is not surprising that later generations should minimise the Cid's misdeeds, and should end by transforming his story almost out of recognition. But these capricious and often grotesque travesties are relatively modern.

They are not found to any excess in the work of the earliest poets who sang the Cid's feats-of-arms. They do not occur in the Latin poem, already quoted, which speaks

enthusiastically of his exploits as being numerous enough to tax the resources of Homer's genius:—

> Tanti victoris nam si retexere,
> Coeperim cuncta, non haec libri mille
> Capere possent, Homero canente,
> Summo labore.

This cannot have been written much later than 1120, about a score of years after the Cid's death. The theme, like many another theme of the same kind, was too alluring to be left to monks who wrote in a learned language for a small circle, and it was soon treated in the speech of the people by *juglares*—not necessarily laymen—who recited their compositions in palaces, castles, monasteries, public squares, markets, or any other place where an audience could be got together. In this way a body of epical poems came into existence. You may say that this is late, and so it is if you are thinking of *Beowulf* and *Waldhere* which, in their actual shapes, certainly existed before the reign of Alfred, and have even been assigned to the sixth century. But we must make a radical distinction. *Beowulf* and *Waldhere* are, we may say, sagas in verse, and have no immediate relation to England, so far as subject goes: the French and Spanish epics are conspicuously national in theme and sentiment. We know that Spain possessed many epics which have not survived: epics on Roderick, on Bernardo del Carpio, on Fernán González, on Garci-Fernández, on Sancho García, perhaps on Alvar Fáñez Minaya, the Cid's lieutenant. Only three of these ancient *cantares de gesta* have been saved, and among them is the epic known as the *Poema del Cid.* Possibly it was not the first vernacular poem on the subject, though it was composed about the middle of the twelfth century, some fifty years after the Cid's time; but, as we shall see presently, there is a long interval between the

date of composition and the date of transcription. As to the author of the *Poema* nothing is known. On the ground that some two hundred lines relate to events occurring at the monastery of Cardeña near Burgos, it has been conjectured that the author was a monk attached to this monastery. It has also been thought, owing to his warlike spirit, that he was a layman, and that he came from the Valle de Arbujuelo: this is inferred from his minute knowledge of the country between Molina and San Esteban de Gormaz, and from the relative vagueness of such knowledge as the itinerary extends to Burgos and Saragossa. These, however, are but surmises. It is further surmised that the substance of the *Poema del Cid* may be derived from earlier epic poems. That may be: but, as it stands, it has a unity of its own.

The *Gesta Ruderici Campidocti* survives in a unique manuscript which was stolen during the last century from the Monastery of St. Isidore at León, was bought in Lisbon by Gotthold Heyne two years before he died on the Berlin barricades of 1848, and is now, after many wanderings, in the Academy of History at Madrid. The *Poema del Cid* also reaches us in a unique manuscript, the work of a certain Per Abbat who in 1307 wrote out the text from a pre-existing copy; this manuscript is not known to have passed through any such adventures as the *Gesta*, but it has evidently had some narrow escapes from destruction: the beginning of the *Poema del Cid* is missing, a page is wanting after verse 2337, and another page is wanting after verse 3307. Had Per Abbat not taken the trouble to write out the *Poema*, or had his manuscript disappeared before October 1596 (when it was transcribed by Juan Ruiz de Ulibarri), the epic on the Cid would be as unknown to us as the epics on Roderick, Bernardo del Carpio, and the rest.

Per Abbat seems to have followed an unfaithful copy in an uncritical fashion, but the defects in the existing text cannot all be laid at his door. There are passages in the *Poema del Cid* which are almost universally regarded as interpolations, and for these Per Abbat is not likely to be responsible. It is more probable that he continued in the bad way of his predecessors, who apparently took it upon themselves to abridge the poem. This desire for greater brevity is answerable for transpositions and corruptions which are the despair of editors and translators; but, mutilated as it is, the *Poema del Cid* is a primitive masterpiece, the merits of which have been increasingly recognised since the text was first published by Tomás Antonio Sánchez in 1779.

The interest in the literary monuments of the Middle Ages was not then what it is now. We are talking of a period more than half a century before any French *chanson de geste* was printed, and the taste for mediævalism had still to be created. The Spanish poet, Quintana, who died only fifty years ago, and was a lad when the *Poema del Cid* was published, could see nothing to admire in it; and yet Quintana's taste in literature was far more catholic than that of most of his contemporaries. Still the *Poema* slowly made its way in the world of letters. One illustration will suffice to show that it was closely studied within a few years of its appearance in print. John Hookham Frere, the British Minister at Madrid, read the *Poema del Cid* on the recommendation of the Marqués de la Romana, who had praised it as 'the most animated and highly poetical as well as the most ancient and curious poem in the language.' In verse 2348 of the *Poema*:—

Aun vea el hora que vos merezca dos tanto—

the curt reply of Pero Bermuez to the Infantes of Carrión

—Frere proposed to read *merezcades* for *merezca dos*, and his conjectural emendation was approved by Romana to whom alone he mentioned it. Some years later Romana was destined to hear it again in striking circumstances. He was then serving with the French in Denmark, and it became necessary for Frere to communicate with him confidentially. It was indispensable that Frere's messenger should be fully accredited; it was of the utmost importance that, in case of arrest, he should not be found in possession of any paper which might suggest his mission. The emended verse of the *Poema del Cid*, easily remembered, formed his sole credentials. Romana at once knew that the agent must come from Frere, who—apart from his fragmentary translation of the *Poema*, now superseded by Ormsby's version—thus began in a small amateurish way the work of critical reconstitution which has been continued by Damas-Hinard and Bello, by Cornu and Restori, by Vollmöller and Lidforss, by Sr. D. Ramón Menéndez Pidal and Mr. Archer Milton Huntington.

Thanks to these and other scholars whose labours cannot be adequately acknowledged by any formal compliment, the text of the *Poema del Cid* has been purged of many corruptions, and made vastly more intelligible. But there are still problems to be solved in connection with it. What, for instance, is the relation of the Spanish epic to the French? The 'patriotic bias' should have no place in historical or literary judgments, but this is a counsel of perfection. Scholars are extremely human, and experience shows that the 'patriotic bias' often intrudes itself unseasonably in their work. In writing of the French *chansons de geste*, Gaston Paris says:—'L'Espagne s'en inspirait dès le milieu du XII^e^ siècle pour chanter le Cid, et composait, même sur les sujets carolingiens des *cantares de gesta* dont

quelques débris se retrouvent dans les *romances* du XV^e^ siècle.' Rightly interpreted, this is a fair statement of the case. But earlier French scholars inclined to exaggerate the amount of Spain's indebtedness to France in this respect, and—by a not unnatural reaction—there is a tendency among the younger generation of Spanish scholars to minimise it. We are not called upon to take part in this contention of wits: we are not concerned here to-day with ingenious special pleas, but with facts.

It is a fact that the earliest extant French *chanson de geste* was in existence a century before the earliest extant Spanish *cantar de gesta*: it is also a fact that the French version of Roland's story was widely diffused in Spain at an early date. It was there recorded in the forged chronicle ascribed to Archbishop Turpin, and it filtered down to the masses who heard it from French pilgrims on the road to the shrine of St. James at Santiago de Compostela. Among these pilgrims were French *trouvères*, and through them the Spaniards became acquainted with the *Chanson de Roland*. It was natural that suggestion should operate in Spain as it operated in Germany, where Konrad produced his *Rolandslied* about the year 1130. There is at least a strong presumption that the author of the *Poema del Cid* had heard the *Chanson de Roland*. Sr. Menéndez y Pelayo, whose patriotism and fine literary sense make him a witness above suspicion, admits that there is a marked resemblance between the battle-scenes in the two poems, and further allows that there are cases of verbal coincidence which cannot be accidental. We may therefore agree with Gaston Paris that the author of the *Poema del Cid* found his inspiration in the *Chanson de Roland*: that is to say, the *Chanson* probably suggested to him the idea of composing a similar work on a Spanish theme, and gave him a few secondary details.

We cannot say less, nor more: except that in subject and sentiment the *Poema* is intensely local.

As regards its substance, the *Poema* is intermediate between history and fable. There is no respect for chronology; one personage is mistaken for a namesake; the Cid's daughters, whose real names were Cristina and María, are called Elvira and Sol, and are provided with husbands to whom they were never married in fact, but who may have been maliciously introduced (as Dozy surmised) to exhibit the Leonese in an odious light. It is the office of an epic poet to exalt his hero, and to belittle that hero's enemies; you might as reasonably look for perfect execution in the *Poema del Cid* as for judicial impartiality. Apart from freaks which may be due to bad copying, we accept the fact that the metre is capricious, fluctuating between lines of fourteen and sixteen syllables: we must also accept the fact that history fares no better than metre, and often fares worse. Yet the spirit of the poet is not consciously unhistorical; he conveys the impression of believing in the truth of his own story. There is an accent of deep sincerity from the outset, in what—owing to mutilation—is now the beginning of the *Poema*, a passage recording the exile of the Cid:—

With tearful eyes he turned to gaze upon the wreck behind:
His rifled coffers, bursten gates, all open to the wind:
No mantle left, nor robe of fur: stript bare his castle hall:
Nor hawk nor falcon in the mew, the perches empty all.
Then forth in sorrow went my Cid, and a deep sigh sighed he;
Yet with a measured voice, and calm, my Cid spake loftily—
'I thank thee, God our Father, thou that dwellest upon high,
I suffer cruel wrong to-day, but of mine enemy.'
As they came riding from Bivar the crow was on the right,
By Burgos gate, upon the left, the crow was there in sight.
My Cid he shrugged his shoulders, and he lifted up his head:
'Good tidings, Alvar Fáñez! we are banished men!' he said.

With sixty lances in his train my Cid rode up the town,
The burghers and their dames from all the windows looking down ;
And there were tears in every eye, and on each lip one word :
'A worthy vassal—would to God he served a worthy Lord!'
Fain would they shelter him, but none dared yield to his desire.
Great was the fear through Burgos town of King Alfonso's ire.
Sealed with his royal seal hath come his letter to forbid
All men to offer harbourage or succour to my Cid.
And he that dared to disobey, well did he know the cost—
His goods, his eyes, stood forfeited, his soul and body lost.
A hard and grievous word was that to men of Christian race ;
And since they might not greet my Cid, they hid them from his face.
He rode to his own mansion gates ; shut firm and fast they were,
Such the King's rigour, save by force, he might not enter there.

We cannot tell how the poem began in its complete state. Some scholars think that what is missing was merely a short unimportant prelude ; others believe that the *Poema del Cid*, as we have it, is but the ending of a vast epic. It must have been vast indeed, for the fragment that survives amounts to 3735 lines ; the *Chanson de Roland* consists of 4001 lines, and it seems improbable that the *Poema* was much longer. At any rate, it is difficult to imagine a more spirited opening than that which chance has given us. The Cid is introduced at a critical moment, misjudged, calumniated, a loyal subject driven from his own Castilian home by an ungrateful Leonese king. There is something spacious in the atmosphere, there is a stately simplicity even in the deliberate repetition of conventional epithet—'the Castilian,' 'he who was born in a good hour,' 'the good one of Bivar,' 'my Cid,' and rarely—very rarely—'the Cid.' The poet lauds his hero, as he should, but does not degrade him by fulsome eulogy ; he is in touch with realities. He seems to feel that the Cid is great enough to afford to have the truth told about him ; with engaging simplicity the *Poema* relates

how the crafty chief imposed on the two Jews, Raquel and Vidas, by depositing with them two chests purporting to be full of gold (but really containing sand), and how he fraudulently borrowed six hundred marks on this worthless security. In the *Crónica general,* a passage founded on a re-cast of the *Poema* represents the Cid as refunding the money, and in the *Romancero general* of 1602 an anonymous ballad-writer excused the trickery on the plea that the chests contained the gold of the Cid's truth :—

No habeis fiado
vuestro dinero por prendas,
mas solo del Cid honrado,
que dentro de aquestos cofres
os dejó depositado
el oro de su verdad,
que es tesoro no preciado.

But there is neither casuistry nor other-worldliness in the primitive poet. He clearly looks upon the incident as a normal business transaction, describes the Cid as postponing payment when the Jews put in their claim, and sees no inconsistency between this passage and an earlier one which vouches for the Cid's fine sense of honour. We read that the Count of Barcelona, on his release,

spurred his steed ; but, as he rode, a backward glance he bent
Still fearing to the last my Cid his promise would repent :
A thing, the world itself to win, my Cid would not have done ;
No perfidy was ever found in him, the Perfect One.

No doubt the *Poema del Cid* is very unequal. Too often it degenerates into tracts of arid prose divided into lines of irregular length with a final monotonous assonance : there are too many deserts dotted with matter-of-fact details, names of insignificant places, and the like. But the poet recovers

himself, glows with local patriotism when recording a gallant feat, and humanises his story with traits of gentler sympathy —as when describing the parting of the Cid from Jimena and his daughters at the monastery of San Pedro de Cardeña. And the Spanish *juglar* has the faculty of rapid, dramatic presentation. His secondary personages are made visible with a few swift strokes—the learned Bishop Jerónimo who, attracted by the Cid's fame as a fighter, comes from afar ('de parte de orient'), and would almost as soon miss a Mass as a battle with the Moors; the grim Alvar Fáñez, the Cid's right arm, his 'diestro braço' as Roland was Charlemagne's 'destre braz'; the Cid's nephew, Félez Muñoz, always at the post of danger; the stolid, inscrutable Pero Bermuez, the standard-bearer whose habitual muteness is transformed into eloquent invective when the hour comes for denouncing the poltroonery of the Infantes of Carrión; and even these fictitious rascals have an air of plausibility and life. In the *Poema del Cid* we meet for the first time with that forcible realistic touch, that alert vision, that intense impression of the thing seen and accurately observed which give to Spanish literature its peculiar stamp of authenticity. And the poem ends on an exultant note with a pæan over the defeat of the imaginary Infantes of Carrión, the really historical betrothal of the Cid's daughters, and the triumphant passing of the Cid, reconciled to the King:—

> And he that in a good hour was born, behold how he hath sped!
> His daughters now to higher rank and greater honour wed:
> Sought by Navarre and Aragon for queens his daughters twain!
> And monarchs of his blood to-day upon the throne of Spain.
> And so his honour in the land grows greater day by day.
> Upon the feast of Pentecost from life he passed away.
> For him and all of us the grace of Christ let us implore.
> And here ye have the story of my Cid Campeador.

The *Poema* is the oldest and most important existing epic on the Cid, but there is ample proof that his deeds were sung in other *cantares de gesta* of early date—earlier than the compilation of Alfonso the Learned's *Crónica general,* which was finished in 1268. Recent investigations place this beyond doubt. It was long supposed that the chapters on the Cid in the *Crónica general* were largely derived from the *Poema,* but Sr. D. Ramón Menéndez Pidal's researches into the history of the text of the *Crónica general* have shown that this view is untenable. The printed text of the *Crónica general,* issued by Florián de Ocampo at Zamora in 1541, is not what it was thought to be—namely, the original compiled by order of Alfonso the Learned: it lies at three removes from that original, and this fact throws new light on the history of epic poetry in Spain. Briefly stated, the results of the recent researches are these: the First *Crónica general* was utilised in another chronicle compiled in 1344; this Second *Crónica general* was condensed in an abridgment which has disappeared; this last abridgment of the Second *Crónica general* is now represented by three derivatives—the Third *Crónica general* issued by Ocampo, the *Crónica de Castilla,* and the *Crónica de Veinte Reyes.* And it is further established that pre-existing *cantares de gesta* on the Cid were utilised in the chronicles as follows: the *Poema del Cid* (from verse 1094 onwards) was used only in the *Crónica de Veinte Reyes,* while what concerns the Cid in the first *Crónica general* comes principally—not (as was believed) from the *Poema del Cid* as we know it, but—from another epic, no longer in existence, which began and continued in very much the same way as the *Poema* for about 1250 lines, where the resemblance ended. The chapters on the Cid in the Second *Crónica general* derive mainly from another vanished *cantar de gesta* which coincided to some extent with

a surviving epic on the Cid known as the *Crónica rimada,* or (less generally) as the *Cantar de Rodrigo.*

This *Crónica rimada,* apparently written by a *juglar* in the diocese of Palencia, was thought by Dozy to be older than the *Poema del Cid,* and Dozy has been made to feel his error. But let us not reproach him, as though we were infallible. Dozy undeniably overestimated the age of the *Crónica rimada* as a whole; still the critical instinct of this great scholar led him to conclude that it was a composite work, that its component parts were not all of the same period, and (a conclusion afterwards confirmed by Milá y Fontanals) that the passage relating to King Fernando (v. 758 ff.)—

El buen rey don Fernando par fue de emperador—

is the oldest fragment embodied in the text. In these respects Dozy's views are admitted to be correct. The *Crónica rimada,* which in its present form is assigned to about the end of the fourteenth century, is an amalgam of diverse and inappropriate materials, and scarcely deserves to be regarded as an original poem at all. If it is probable that the author of the *Poema del Cid* had heard the *Chanson de Roland,* it is still more probable that the author of the *Crónica rimada* had heard *Garin le Lohérain.* Not only does he incorporate part of a lost *cantar de gesta* on King Fernando; he borrows from other lost Spanish epics, from the existing *Poema del Cid,* from degraded oral traditions, and perhaps from foreign sources not yet identified. The patchwork is a poor thing pieced together by an imitator who has lost the secret of the primitive epic, and insincerely commemorates exploits which he must have known to be fabulous—such as the Cid's expedition to France, and his triumph under the walls of Paris. But, though greatly

inferior to the *Poema*, the *Crónica rimada* is interesting in substance and manner. It includes primitive versions of legends which, in more refined and elaborate forms, were destined to become famous throughout Europe: the quarrel between the Cid's father and Count Gómez de Gormaz (not in consequence of a blow, or anything connected with an extravagantly artificial code of honour, but over a matter of sheep-stealing); the death of the Count at the hands of the Cid, not yet thirteen years of age; and the marriage of the Count's daughter Jimena to her father's slayer, who is represented as a reluctant bridegroom :—

Ally despossavan a doña Ximena Gomes con Rodrigo el Castellano.
Rodrigo respondió muy sannudo contra el rey Castellano:
Señor, vos me despossastes mas a mi pessar que de grado.

The Cid in the *Poema* is a loyal subject, faithful to his alien King under extreme provocation. In the *Crónica rimada* he is transformed into a haughty, turbulent feudal baron, more like the Cid of the later Spanish ballads or *romances*; and it is worth noting that the irregular versification of the *Crónica rimada*, in which lines of sixteen syllables predominate, approximates roughly to the metre of the *romances*, to which I shall return in a later lecture. For the moment it is enough to say that by 1612 there were enough ballads on the Cid to form a *romancero*, and that in the most complete modern collection they amount to 205. Southey and Ormsby, both ardent admirers of the *Poema*, thought that the *romances* on the Cid impressed 'more by their number than their light,' and no doubt these ballads vary greatly in merit. But a few are really admirable—such as the *romance* adapted with masterly skill by Lope de Vega in *Las Almenas de Toro*.

The mention of this great dramatist reminds one that the Cid underwent another transformation in the theatre. Guillén de Castro introduced him in *Las Mocedades del Cid*

as the central figure in a dramatic conflict between love and filial duty; Corneille took over the situation, and created a masterpiece which completely overshadowed Castro's play. The names of other dramatists who treated the same theme are very properly forgotten: another great dramatisation of the Cid's story is about as likely as another great dramatisation of the story of Romeo and Juliet. But the poetic possibilities of the Cid legend are inexhaustible. Nearly fifty years ago Victor Hugo, then in the noontide of his incomparable genius, reincarnated the primitive Cid in the first series of *La Légende des siècles*. Who can forget the impression left by the first reading of *Quand le Cid fut entré dans le Généralife*, by the sixteen poems which form the *Romancero du Cid*, by the interview between the Cid and the sheik Jabias in *Bivar*, and by that wonder of symbolism *Le Cid exilé*? It is as unhistorical as you please, but marvellous for its grandiose vision and haunting music:—

> Et, dans leur antichambre, on entend quelquefois
> Les pages, d'une voix féminine et hautaine,
> Dire:—Ah oui-da, le Cid! c'était un capitaine
> D'alors. Vit-il encor, ce Campéador-là?

The question was soon answered. Within three years a fiercer—perhaps a more melodramatic—aspect of the Cid was revealed by Leconte de Lisle in three pieces which contributed to the sombre splendour of the *Poèmes barbares*, and now appear among the *Poèmes tragiques*; and thirty years later, in our own day, José Maria de Heredia, the Benvenuto of French verse, included a figure of the Cid among his glittering *Trophées*. These three are masters of their craft, and one of them is the greatest poet of his time; but their puissant art has not superseded the virile creation of the nameless, candid, patriotic singer who wrote the *Poema del Cid* some eight hundred years ago.

CHAPTER II

THE ARCHPRIEST OF HITA

MANY of the earliest poems extant in Castilian are anonymous, impersonal compositions, more or less imitative. The *Misterio de los Reyes Magos*, for instance, is suggested by a Latin Office used at Orleans; the *Libro de Apolonio*, the *Vida de Santa María Egipciacqua*, the *Libro dels tres Reyes dorient*, and the *Libro de Alixandre* are from French sources. French influence is likewise visible in the work of Gonzalo de Berceo, the earliest Spanish poet whose name we know for certain; writing in the first half of the thirteenth century, Berceo draws largely on the *Miracles de Nostre Dame*, a collection of edifying legends versified by Gautier de Coinci, Prior of the monastery at Vic-sur-Aisne. As Gautier died in 1236, the speed with which his version of these pious stories passed from France to Spain goes to show that literary communication had already been established between the two countries. At one time or another during the Middle Ages all Western Europe followed the French lead in literature. From about 1130, when Konrad wrote his *Rolandslied*, French influence prevailed in Germany for a century, affecting poets so considerable as Hartmann von Aue, Wolfram von Eschenbach, and Gottfried von Strassburg. French influence was dominant in Italy from before the reign of Frederick II., the patron of the Provençal poets and the chief of the Sicilian school of poetry, till the coming of Dante; French

versions of tales of Troy, Alexander, Cæsar and Charlemagne were translated; so also were French versions of the Arthurian legend, as we gather from the celebrated passage in the fifth canto of the *Inferno* :—

> La bocca mi baciò tutto tremante :
> Galeotto fu il libro e chi lo scrisse :
> Quel giorno più non vi leggemmo avante.

You all know that French influence was most noticeable in England from Layamon's time to Chaucer's, and that Chaucer himself, besides translating part of the *Roman de la Rose*, borrowed hints from Guillaume de Machault and Oton de Granson—two minor poets whose works, by the way, were treasured by the Marqués de Santillana, of whom I shall have something to say in the next lecture. Wherever we turn at this period, sooner or later we shall find that French literature has left its mark. Scandinavian scholars inform us that the *Strengleikar* includes translations of Marie de France's *lais*; and *Floire et Blanchefleur* was also done into Icelandic at the beginning of the fourteenth century when the Archpriest of Hita—who refers appreciatively to this French romance—was still young. Jean Bodel's well-worn couplet is a trite statement of fact :—

> Ne sont que trois matières à nul homme attendant,
> De France et de Bretaigne et de Rome le grant.

This rapid summary is enough to prove that Spain, in copying French originals, was doing no more than other countries. The work of her early singers has the interest which attaches to every new literary experiment, but the great mass of it necessarily lacks originality and force. It was not until the fourteenth century was fairly advanced that Spain produced two authors of unmistakable individual genius. One of these was the Infante Don Juan Manuel,

the earliest prose-writer of real distinction in Castilian, and the other was Juan Ruiz, Archpriest of Hita, near Guadalajara. We know scarcely anything certain about Ruiz except his name and status which he gives incidentally when invoking the divine assistance in writing his work:—

> E por que de todo bien es comiençó e rays
> la virgen santa marja por ende yo Joan Rroys
> açipreste de fita della primero fis
> cantar de los sus goços siete que ansi dis.

In one of the manuscripts[1] which contain his poems, his messenger Trotaconventos seems to state his birthplace:—

> Fija, mucho vos saluda uno que es de Alcalá.

It has been inferred from this that the Archpriest was a native of Alcalá de Henares, and therefore a fellow-townsman of Cervantes. It is possible that he may have been, but the Gayoso manuscript gives a variant on the reading in the Salamanca manuscript:—

> Fija, mucho vos saluda uno que mora en Alcalá.

The truth is that we do not know where and when Juan Ruiz was born, nor where and when he died. It is thought that he was born towards the end of the thirteenth century, and Sr. Puyol y Alonso in his interesting monograph suggests 1283 as a likely date: but these are conjectures.

[1] The Archpriest's poems are preserved in three ancient manuscripts known respectively as the Gayoso, Toledo, and Salamanca MSS. (1) The Gayoso MS. was finished on Thursday, July 23, 1389; it formerly belonged to Benito Martínez Gayoso, came into the possession of Tomás Antonio Sánchez on May 12, 1787, and is now in the library of the Royal Spanish Academy at Madrid. (2) The Toledo MS., which belongs to the same period, has been transferred from the library of Toledo Cathedral to the Biblioteca Nacional at Madrid. (3) The Salamanca MS., formerly in the library of the Colegio Mayor de San Bartolomé at Salamanca, is now in the Royal Library at Madrid: though somewhat later in date than the Gayoso and Toledo MSS., it is more carefully written, and the text is less incomplete.

Many persons, however, find it difficult to resign themselves to humble agnosticism, and, by drawing on imagination for fact, endeavour to construct what we may call hypothetical biographies. Ruiz is an unpromising subject, yet he has not escaped altogether. A writer of comparatively modern date—Francisco de Torres, author of an unpublished *Historia de Guadalajara*—alleges that the Archpriest was living at Guadalajara in 1410. It is difficult to reconcile this statement with the assertion made by Alfonso Paratinén who seems to have been the copyist of the Salamanca manuscript. At the end of his copy Paratinén writes: 'This is the Archpriest of Hita's book which he composed, being imprisoned by order of the Cardinal Don Gil, Archbishop of Toledo.' This refers to Don Gil de Albornoz, an able, pushing prelate who was Archbishop of Toledo from 1337 till his death in 1367. It is known that Don Gil de Albornoz was exiled from Spain by Peter the Cruel in 1350, and that on January 7, 1351, one Pedro Fernández had succeeded Juan Ruiz as Archpriest of Hita. Now, according to stanza 1634 in the Salamanca manuscript, Ruiz finished his work in 1381 of the Spanish Era:—

> Era de mjll e tresjentos e ochenta e vn años
> fue conpuesto el rromançe, por muchos males e daños
> que fasen muchos e muchas aotras con sus engaños
> e por mostrar alos synplex fablas e versos estraños.

The year 1381 of the Spanish Era corresponds to 1343 in our reckoning, and we may accept the statement in the text that Juan Ruiz wrote his poem at this date. We may further take it that the poem was written in jail. We might refuse to believe this on the sole authority of Alfonso Paratinén whose copy was not made till the end of the fourteenth (or the beginning of the fifteenth) century; but the copyist is corroborated by the author who, in each of

his first three stanzas, begs God to free him from the prison in which he lies:—

libra Amj dios desta presion do yago.

It is reasonable to assume that Juan Ruiz was well past middle age when he wrote his book; hence it is almost incredible that, as Torres states, he survived his imprisonment by nearly sixty years. There is nothing, except the absence of proof, against the current theory that the Archpriest died in prison—possibly at Toledo—shortly before January 7, 1351, when Pedro Fernández took his place at Hita; but there is nothing, except the same absence of proof, against a counter-theory that he was released before this date, that he followed Don Gil Albornoz into exile, and that he died at Avignon. All such theories are, I repeat, in the nature of hypothetical biography. We have no data, and are left to ramble in the field of conjecture.

Some idea of the Archpriest's personality may, however, be gathered from his work. We are not told how long he was in jail, nor what his offence was. He himself declares in his *Cántica de loores de Santa María* that his punishment was unjust:—

Santa virgen escogida . . .
del mundo salud e vida . . .
de aqueste dolor que siento
en presion syn meresçer,
tu me deña estorcer
con el tu deffendjmjento.

His testimony in his own favour is not conclusive. Possibly, as Sr. Puyol y Alonso suggests, Juan Ruiz may have offended some of the upper clergy by ridiculing them in much the same way as he satirises the Dean and Chapter in his *Cántica de los clérigos de Talavera* where influential dignitaries are most disrespectfully mentioned by name, or

perhaps made recognisable under transparent pseudonyms. The Archpriest is more likely to have been imprisoned for some such indiscretion than for loose living. Clerical morality was at a low point in Spain during the fourteenth century, and, though Juan Ruiz was a disreputable cleric, he was no worse than many of his brethren. But he was certainly no better than most of them. His first editor, Tomás Antonio Sánchez, acting against the remonstrances of Jove-Llanos and the Spanish Academy of History, contrived to lend Juan Ruiz a false air of respectability by omitting from the text some objectionable passages and by bowdlerising others. Sánchez did not foresee that his good intentions would be frustrated by José Amador de los Ríos, who thoughtfully collected the scandalous stanzas which had been omitted, and printed them by themselves in the *Ilustraciones* to the fourth volume of his *Historia de la literatura española.* If Sánchez had made Juan Ruiz seem better than he was, Ríos made him seem worse. Yet Ríos had succeeded somehow in persuading himself that Juan Ruiz was an excellent man who voluntarily became 'a holocaust of the moral idea which he championed.' Few who read the Archpriest's poem are likely to share this view. It would be an exaggeration to say that he was an unbeliever, for, though he indulges in irreverent parodies of the liturgy, his verses to the Blessed Virgin are unmistakably sincere; he was a criminous clerk like many of his contemporaries who had taken orders as the easiest means of gaining a livelihood; but, unlike these jovial goliards, the sensual Archpriest had the temperament of a poet as well as the tastes of a satyr. It is as a poet that he interests us, as the author of a work the merits of which can scarcely be overestimated as regards its ironical, picaresque presentation of scenes of clerical and lay life. The Archpriest was no

literary fop, but he was dimly aware that he had left behind him a work that would keep his memory alive:—

ffis vos pequeno libro de testo, mas la glosa,
non creo que es chica antes es byen grand prosa,
que sobre cada fabla se entyende otra cosa,
syn la que se alega en la rason fermosa.
De la santidat mucha es byen grand lycionario,
mas de juego e de burla chico breujario,
por ende fago punto e çierro mj almario,
sea vos chica fabla solas e letuario.

The very name of his book, which has but recently become available in a satisfactory form, has long been doubtful. About a century after it was written, Alfonso Martínez de Toledo, the Archpriest of Talavera, called it a *Tratado*; a few years later than the Archpriest of Talavera, Santillana referred to it curtly as the *Libro del Arcipreste de Hita*; Sánchez entitled it *Poesías* when he issued it in 1790, and Florencio Janer republished it in 1864 as the *Libro de Cantares*. But, as Wolf pointed out in 1831,[1] Ruiz himself speaks of it as the *Libro de buen amor*. However, we do not act with any indecent haste in these matters, and it was not till just seventy years later that Wolf's hint was taken by M. Ducamin. We can at last read the *Libro de buen amor* more or less as Ruiz wrote it; or, rather, we can read the greater part of it, for fragments are missing, some passages having been removed from the manuscripts, perhaps by over-modest readers. Yet much remains to do. A diplomatic edition is valuable, but it is only an instalment of what we need. If any one amongst you is in search of a tough piece of work, he can do no better for himself and us

[1] In a contribution to the *Jahrbücher der Literatur* (Wien, 1831-2), vols. lv., pp. 234-264; lvi., pp. 239-266; lvii., pp. 169-200; lviii., pp. 220-268; lix., pp. 25-50. See the reprint in Ferdinand Wolf, *Studien zur Geschichte der spanischen und portugiesischen Nationalliteratur* (Berlin, 1859).

than by preparing a critical edition of the *Libro de buen amor* with a commentary and—above all—a vocabulary.

The Archpriest of Hita was an original genius, but his originality consists in his personal attitude towards life and in his handling of old material. No literary genius, however great, can break completely with the past, and the Archpriest underwent the influence of his predecessors at home. It is the fashion nowadays to say that he was not learned, and no doubt he poses at times as a simpering provincial ignoramus, especially as regards ecclesiastical doctrine and discipline:—

> Escolar so mucho rrudo, njn maestro njn doctor,
> aprendi e se poco para ser demostrador.

But the Archpriest does not wish to be taken at his word, and, to prevent any possible misunderstanding, in almost the next breath he slyly advises his befooled reader to consult the *Espéculo* as well as

> los libros de ostiense, que son grand parlatorio,
> el jnocençio quarto, vn sotil consistorio,
> el rrosario de guido, nouela e diratorio.

He dabbles in astrology, notes (with something like a wink) that a man's fate is ruled by the planet under which he is born, and cites Ptolemy and Plato to support a theory which is so comfortable an excuse for his own pleasant vices. We shall see that he knew much of what was best worth knowing in French literature, and that he knew something of colloquial Arabic appears from the Moorish girl's replies to Trotaconventos. Probably enough his allusions to Plato and Aristotle imply nothing more solid in the way of learning than Chaucer's allusion to Pythagoras in *The Book of the Duchesse*. Still he seems to have known Latin, French, Arabic, and perhaps Italian, besides his native

language, and we cannot lay stress on his ignorance without appearing to reflect disagreeably on the clergy of to-day. The Archpriest was not, of course, a mediæval scholiast, much less an exact scholar in the modern sense; but, for a man whose lot was cast in an insignificant village, his reading and general culture were far above the average. A brief examination of the *Libro de buen amor* will make this clear: it will also show that the Archpriest had qualities more enviable than all the learning in the world.

He opens with forty lines invoking the blessing of God upon his work, and then he descends suddenly into prose, quoting copiously from Scripture, insisting on the purity of his motives, and asserting that his object is to warn men and women against foolish or unhallowed love. Having lulled the suspicions of uneasy readers with this unctuous preamble, he parenthetically observes: 'Still, as it is human nature to sin, in case any should choose to indulge in foolish love (which I do not advise), various methods of the same will be found set out here.' After thus disclosing his real intention, he announces his desire to show by example how every detail of poetry should be executed artistically—*segund que esta çiencia requiere*—and returns to verse. He again commends his work to God, celebrates the joys of Our Lady, and then proceeds to write a sort of picaresque novel in the metre known as the *mester de clerecía*—a quatrain of monorhymed alexandrines.

The Archpriest begins by quoting Dionysius Cato[1] to the effect that, though man may have his trials, he should cultivate a spirit of gaiety. And, as no man in his wits can laugh without cause, Juan Ruiz undertakes to provide entertainment, but hopes that he may not be misunderstood as

[1] Interpone tuis interdum gaudia curis,
Ut possis animo quemvis sufferre laborem.—*Disticha*, iii. 6.

was the Greek when he argued with the Roman. This allusion gives the writer his opportunity, and he relates a story which recalls the episode of Panurge's argument with Thaumaste, 'ung grand clerc d'Angleterre.' Briefly, the tale is this. When the Romans besought the Greeks to grant them laws, they were required to prove themselves worthy of the privilege, and, as the difference of language made verbal discussion impossible, it was agreed that the debate should be carried on by signs (Thaumaste, you may remember, preferred signs because 'les matières sont tant ardues, que les parolles humaines ne seroyent suffisantes à les expliquer à mon plaisir'). The Greek champion was a master of all learning, while the Romans were represented by an illiterate ragamuffin dressed in a doctor's gown. The sage held up one finger, the lout held up his thumb and two fingers; the sage stretched out his open hand, the lout shook his fist violently. This closed the argument, for the wise Greek hastily admitted that the Roman claim was justified. On being asked to interpret the gestures which had perplexed the multitude, the Greek replied: 'I said that there was one God, the Roman answered that there were three Persons in one God, and made the corresponding sign; I said that everything was governed by God's will, the Roman answered that the whole world was in God's power, and he spoke truly; seeing that they understood and believed in the Trinity, I agreed that they were worthy to receive laws.' The Roman's interpretation differed materially: 'He held up one finger, meaning that he would poke my eye out; as this infuriated me, I answered by threatening to gouge both his eyes out with my two fingers, and smash his teeth with my thumb; he held out his open palm, meaning that he would deal me such a cuff as would make my ears tingle; I answered back that I would give

him such a punch as he would never forget as long as he lived.' The humour is distinctly primitive, but Juan Ruiz bubbles over with contagious merriment as he rhymes the tale, and goes on to warn the reader against judging anything —more especially the *Libro de buen amor*—by appearances :—

la bulrra que oyeres non la tengas en vil,
la manera del libro entiendela sotil ;
que saber bien e mal, desjr encobierto e donegujl,
tu non fallaras vno de trobadores mjll.

Then, in his digressive way, the Archpriest avers that man, like the beasts that perish, needs food and a companion of the opposite sex, adding mischievously that this opinion, which would be highly censurable if he uttered it, becomes respectable when held by Aristotle.

Como dise Aristotiles, cosa es verdadera,
el mundo por dos cosas trabaja : por la primera
por aver mantenençia ; la otra cosa era
por aver juntamjento con fenbra plasentera.

Sylo dixiese de mjo, seria de culpar ;
diselo grand filosofo, non so yo de rebtar ;
delo que dise el sabio non deuemos dubdar,
que por obra se prueva el sabio e su fablar.

Next the Archpriest, confessing himself to be a man of sin like the rest of us, relates how he was once in love with a Lady of Quality (too wary to be trapped by gifts) who rebuffed his messenger by saying that men were deceivers ever, and by quoting from 'Ysopete' an adaptation of the fable concerning the mountain in labour. The form 'Ysopete' suggests that the Archpriest used some French version of Æsop or Phaedrus, though not that of Marie de France, in whose translation (as edited by Warnke) this particular fable does not appear.

Undaunted by this check, the Archpriest does not lose

his equanimity, reflects how greatly Solomon was in the right in saying that all is vanity, and determines to speak no ill of the coy dame, since women are, after all, the most delightful of creatures:—

> mucho seria villano e torpe pajes
> sy dela muger noble dixiese cosa rrefes,
> ca en muger loçana, fermosa e cortes,
> todo bien del mundo e todo plaser es.

A less squeamish beauty—*otra non santa*—attracted the fickle Archpriest, who wrote for her a *troba cazurra*, and employed Ferrand García as go-between. García courted the facile fair on his own account, and left Juan Ruiz to swear (as he does roundly) at a second fiasco. However, the Archpriest philosophically remarks that man cannot escape his fate, and illustrates this by telling how a Moorish king named Alcarás called in five astrologists to cast his son's horoscope: all five predicted different catastrophes, and all five proved to be right. Comically enough, Juan Ruiz remembers at this point that he is a priest, disclaims all sympathy with fatalistic doctrine, and smugly adds that he believes in predestination only so far as it is compatible with the Catholic faith. But he forgets his orthodoxy as conveniently as he remembered it, rejoices that he was born under the sign of Venus (a beautifying planet which not only keeps young men young, but takes years off the old), and, since even the hardest pear ripens at last, he hopes for better luck. Yet he is disappointed in his attempt to beguile another Lady of Quality who proves to be (so to say) a *bonâ fide* holder for value, and the recital of this third misadventure ends with the fable of the thief and the dog.

At this point his neighbour Don Amor or Love comes to visit the chagrined Archpriest, and is angrily reproached for promising much and doing little beyond enfeebling man's

mental and physical powers—a point exemplified by a Spanish variant of that most indecorous *fableau*, the *Valet aux douze femmes*. After listening to fable upon fable, introduced to prove that he is in alliance with the Seven Deadly Sins, Love gently explains to the Archpriest that he is wrong to flare into a heat, that he has attempted to fly too high, that fine ladies are not for him, that he should study the Art of Love as expounded by Pamphilus and Ovid, that beauty is more than rank, and that he should enlist the services of an ingratiating old woman. Love quotes the tale of the two idlers who wished to marry, supplements this with the obscene story of Don Pitas Payas, and recommends the Archpriest to put money in his purse when he goes a-wooing. Part of this passage may be quoted in Gibson's rendering :—

O money meikle doth, and in luve hath meikle fame,
It maketh the rogue a worthy wight, a carle of honest name,
It giveth a glib tongue to the dumb, snell feet unto the lame,
And he who lacketh both his hands will clutch it all the same.

A man may be a gawkie loon, and eke a hirnless brute,
But money makes him gentleman, and learnit clerk to boot;
For as his money bags do swell, so waxeth his repute,
But he whose purse has naught intill't, must wear a beggar's suit.

With money in thy fist thou need'st never lack a friend,
The Pope will give his benison, and a happy life thou'lt spend,
Thou may'st buy a seat in paradise, and life withouten end,
Where money trickleth plenteouslie there blessings do descend.

I saw within the Court of Rome, of sanctitie the post,
That money was in great regard, and heaps of friends could boast,
That a' were warstlin' to be first to honour it the most,
And curchit laigh, and kneelit down, as if before the Host.

It maketh Priors, Bishops, and Abbots to arise,
Archbishops, Doctors, Patriarchs, and Potentates likewise,
It giveth Clerics without lair the dignities they prize,
It turneth falsitie to truth, and changeth truth to lies. . . .

O Money is a Provost and Judge of sterling weight,
A Councillor the shrewdest, and a subtle Advocate;
A Constable and Bailiff of importance very great,
Of all officers that be, 'tis the mightiest in the state.

In brief I say to thee, at Money do not frown,
It is the world's strong lever to turn it upside down,
It maketh the clown a master, the master a glarish clown,
Of all things in the present age it hath the most renown.

Finally Love sets to moralising, and departs after warning his client against over-indulgence in either white wine or red, holding up as an awful example the hermit who, after years of ascetic practices, got drunk for the first time in his life, and committed atrocious crimes which brought him to the gallows. The Archpriest ponders over Love's seductive precepts, finds that his conduct hitherto has been in accordance with them, determines to persevere in the same crooked but pleasant path, and looks forward to the future with glad confidence. He straightway consults Love's wife—Venus—concerning a new passion which (as he says) he has conceived for Doña Endrina, a handsome young widow of Calatayud. Whatever may be the case with the Archpriest's other love affairs, this episode in the *Libro de buen amor* is imaginative, being an extremely brilliant hispaniolisation of a dreary Latin play entitled *De Amore*, ascribed to a misty personage known as Pamphilus Maurilianus—apparently a monk who lived during the twelfth century. The old crone of the Latin play reappears in the *Libro de buen amor* as Urraca (better recognised by her nickname of Trotaconventos), Galatea becomes Doña Endrina, and Pamphilus becomes Don Melón de la Uerta. There are passages in which Don Melón de la Uerta seems, at first sight, to be a pseudonym of the Archpriest's; but the source of the story is beyond all doubt, for Juan Ruiz

supplies a virtuous ending, and carefully explains that for the licentious character of the narrative Pamphilus and Ovid are responsible:—

> doña endrina e don melon en vno casados son,
> alegran se las conpañas en las bodas con rrason;
> sy vjllanja ha dicho aya de vos perdon,
> quelo felo de estoria dis panfilo e nason.

In order that there may be no misconception on this point, the Archpriest returns to it later, averring that no such experience ever befell him personally, and that he gives the story to set women on their guard against lying procuresses and bland lechers:—

> Entyende byen mj estoria dela fija del endrino,
> dixela por te dar ensienpro, non por que amj vjno;
> guardate de falsa vieja, de rriso de mal vesjno,
> sola con ome non te fyes, njn te llegues al espjno.

He resumes with an account of an enterprise which narrowly escaped miscarriage owing to a quarrel with Trotaconventos, to whom he had applied an uncomplimentary epithet in jest; but, seeing his blunder, he pacified his tetchy ally, and carried out his plan. Cast down by the sudden death of his mistress, he consoled himself by writing *cantares cazurros* which delighted all the ladies who read them (a privilege denied to us, for these compositions are not included in the existing manuscripts of the *Libro de buen amor*). Having recovered from his dejection, in the month of March the Archpriest went holiday-making in the mountains, where he met with a new type of women whose coming-on dispositions and robust charms he celebrates satirically. These *cantigas de serrana*,—slashing parodies on the Galician *cantos de ledino*,—perhaps the boldest and most interesting of his metrical experiments, are followed by

copies of devout verses on Santa María del Vado and on the Passion of Christ.

The next transition is equally abrupt. While dining at Burgos with Don Jueves Lardero (the last Thursday before Lent), the Archpriest receives a letter from Doña Quaresma (Lent) exhorting her officials—more especially archpriests and clerics—to arm for the combat against Don Carnal who symbolises the meat-eating tendencies prevalent during the rest of the year. Then follows an allegorical description of the encounter between Doña Quaresma and Don Carnal who, after a series of disasters, recovers his supremacy, and returns in triumph accompanied by Don Amor (Love). On Easter Sunday Don Amor's popularity is at its height, and secular priests, laymen, monks, nuns, ladies and gentlemen, sally forth in procession to meet him:—

> Dia era muy ssanto dela pascua mayor,
> el sol era salydo muy claro e de noble color;
> los omes e las aves e toda noble flor,
> todos van rresçebir cantando al amor. . . .
>
> Las carreras van llenas de grandes proçesiones,
> muchos omes ordenados que otorgan perdones,
> los legos segrales con muchos clerisones,
> enla proçesion yua el abad de borbones.
>
> ordenes de çisten conlas de sant benjto,
> la orden de crus njego con su abat bendjto,
> quantas ordenes son nonlas puse en escripto:
> '¡ venite, exultemus !' cantan en alto grito. . . .
>
> los dela trinjdat conlos frayles del carmen
> e los de santa eulalya, por que non se ensanen,
> todos manda que digan que canten e que llamen:
> '¡ benedictus qui venjt !' Responden todos: 'amen.'

Rejecting the invitations of irreverent monks, priests, knights and nuns, Love lodges with the Archpriest, and sets up his tent close by till next morning, when he leaves for

Alcalá. The Archpriest becomes enamoured of a rich young widow, and—later—of a lady whom he saw praying in church on St. Mark's Day; but his suit is rejected by both, and his baffled agent Trotaconventos recommends him to pay his addresses to a nun. The beldame takes the business in hand, and finds a listener in Doña Garoza who, after much verbal fencing and interchange of fables, asks for a description of her suitor. Thanks to her natural curiosity, we see Juan Ruiz as he presented himself to Trotaconventos's (that is to say, his own) sharp, unflattering sight, and the portrait is even more precise and realistic than Cervantes's likeness of himself. "Juan Ruiz was tall, long in the trunk, broad-shouldered but spare, with a good-sized head set on a thick neck, dark-haired, sallow-complexioned, wide-mouthed with rather coarse ruddy lips, long-nosed, with black eyebrows far apart overhanging small eyes, with a protruding chest, hairy arms, big-boned wrists, and a neat pair of legs ending in small feet: though given to strutting like a peacock with deliberate gait, he was a man of sound sense, deep-voiced, and a skilled musician :—

> Es ligero, valiente, byen mançebo de djas,
> sabe los instrumentos e todas juglerias,
> doñeador alegre para las çapatas mjas,
> tal ome como este, non es en todas crias.

Doña Garoza allows the Archpriest to visit her, makes him acquainted with the charm of Platonic love—*lynpio amor*—prays for his spiritual welfare, and might have persuaded him to renounce all carnal affections, had she not died within two months of meeting him. Forgetting her virtuous teaching, the Archpriest tries to set afoot an intrigue with a Moorish girl, to whom he sends Trotaconventos with poems; but his luck is out. The Moorish girl is deaf to his entreaties, and Trotaconventos is taken from him by death.

Saddened by this loss, and by the thought that many a door which her ingratiating arts had forced open for him will now be closed, he utters a long lament over the transitoriness of mortal life, moralises at large, denounces the inexorable cruelty of death, and at last resigns himself with the reflection that the old wanton, who so nobly did such dirty work, is honourably placed in heaven between two martyrs:—

¡ ay ! mj trota conventos, mj leal verdadera !
muchos te sigujan biua, muerta yazes señera ;
¿ado te me han leuado ? non cosa çertera ;
nunca torna con nueuas quien anda esta carrera.
Cyerto, en parayso estas tu assentada,
con dos martyres deues estar aconpañada,
sienpre en este mundo fuste por dos maridada ;
¿quien te me rrebato, vieja par mj sienpre lasrada ?

The Archpriest adds an impudent epitaph on Trotaconventos, who is represented as saying that, though her mode of life was censurable, she made many a happy marriage; as begging all who visit her grave to say a *Pater Noster* for her; and as wishing them in return the conjoint joys of both heavenly and earthly love. After this sally of blasphemous irony comes advice as to the arms which Christians should use against the devil, the world, and the flesh—a tedious exhortation from which the author breaks away to declare that he has always wished everything (including sermons) to be short, and with this he digresses into a panegyric on little women. But another March has come round, and, as usual, in the spring the Archpriest's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love. In default of the gifted Trotaconventos, he employs Don Furón, a liar, drunkard, thief, mischief-maker, gambler, bully, glutton, wrangler, blasphemer, fortune-teller, debauchee, trickster, fool and idler: apart from the defects inherent to these fourteen characters, Don Furón is as good

a *fa tutto* as one can hope to have. But he fails in the only embassy on which he is sent, and, with a good-humoured laugh at his own folly, the Archpriest narrates his last misadventure as a lover. With an elaborate exposition of the saintly sentiments which actuated the author (for whom every reader is entreated to say a *Pater Noster* and an *Ave Maria*), the *Libro de buen amor* ends. What seems to be a supplement contains seven poems addressed to the Virgin (a begging-song for poor students being interpolated between the second and third poem). The Salamanca manuscript closes with an amusingly impertinent composition in which a certain archpriest unnamed—possibly Juan Ruiz himself—is described as being sent by Don Gil Albornoz, the Archbishop of Toledo, with a brief from the Pope inculcating celibacy on the Dean and Chapter of Talavera. What follows has all the air of being a personal experience. The brief is no sooner read in church than the Dean is on his legs, threatening to resign rather than submit; the Treasurer wishes that he could lay hands on the meddling Archbishop, and both the Precentor Sancho and the Canon Don Gonzalo join in an indignant protest against the attempt to curtail clerical privileges. The Gayoso manuscript, which omits this *Cántica de los clérigos de Talavera*, includes two songs for blind men, and these are printed by M. Ducamin as a sort of last postscript to the *Libro de buen amor*.

Having analysed the contents of the work, we are now in a better position to form a judgment on the conclusion implied by an incidental question in M. Alfred Jeanroy's admirable book, *Les Origines de la poésie lyrique en France au moyen âge*:—'Mais qui ne sait que l'œuvre de Hita est une macédoine d'imitations françaises, qui témoignent du reste de la plus grande originalité d'esprit?' The proposition may be too broadly put, but it is fundamentally true. The Arch-

priest borrows in all directions. The sources of between twenty and thirty of his fables have been pointed out by Wolf, and may be followed up a little higher in the works of M. Hervieux and Mr. Jacobs. Orientalists no doubt could tell us, if they chose, the origin of the story of King Alcarás and his doomed son:—

> Era vn Rey de moros, Alcaras nonbre avia;
> nasçiole vn fijo bello, mas de aquel non tenja.
> enbjo por sus sabios, dellos saber querria
> el signo e la planeta del fijo quel nasçia.

Once at least the Archpriest hits on a subject which also attracted his contemporary the Infante Don Juan Manuel: the *Libro de buen amor* and the *Conde Lucanor* both relate the story of the thief who sold his soul to the devil. But the differences between the two men are more marked than the resemblances. The Archpriest has nothing of the Infante's imposing gravity and cold disdain; his temperament is more exuberant, the note of his humour is more incorrigibly picaresque, and he seeks his subjects further afield. The tale of the pantomimic dispute between the learned Greek and the illiterate Roman is thought by Wolf to derive probably from some mediæval Latin source, and Sr. Puyol y Alonso particularises with the ingenious suggestion that the Archpriest took it from a commentary by Accursius on Pomponius's text of the Digest (*De origine juris*, Tit. ii.). Perhaps: but this is just the sort of story that circulated orally in the Middle Ages from one country to another as smoking-room jests float across the Atlantic now, and Ruiz is quite as likely to have picked it up from a tramping tinker, or a tumbler at a booth, as from the famous juridical *glossator* of the previous century.

We cannot tell who his friends were nor where he went; but the *Libro de buen amor* shows that he had acquaintances

in all classes—especially in the least starched of them—and it would not surprise me to learn that he had wandered as far as Italy or France. Life was brighter, more full of opportunities, for a clerical picaroon in the fourteenth century than it is to-day. Now he would be suspended as a scandal: then the world was all before him where to choose. Of Italian I am not so sure: certainly the Archpriest knew French literature better than we should expect. Observe that the Treasurer of the Talavera Chapter mentions Blanchefleur, Floire and Tristan, and (of course) finds their trials less pathetic than his own and the worthy Teresa's.

E del mal de vos otros amj mucho me pesa,
otrosi de lo mjo e del mal de teresa,
pero dexare atalauera e yr me aoropesa
ante quela partyr de toda la mj mesa.
Ca nunca fue tan leal blanca flor a flores
njn es agora tristan con todos sus amores;
que fase muchas veses rrematar los ardores,
e sy de mi la parto nunca me dexaran dolores.

How did the Archpriest come to hear the tale of Tristan, not yet widely diffused in Spain? Was it through *Le Chèvrefeuille*, one of Marie de France's *lais*? His previous reference to 'Ysopete' might almost tempt some to think so:—

esta fabla conpuesta, de ysopete sacada.

However this may be, there is no doubt as to where the Archpriest found his *exemplo* of the youth who wished to marry three wives, and thought better of it: this, as already stated, is a variant on the *fableau* known as *Le Valet aux douze femmes*. Sr. Puyol y Alonso hints at a Spanish origin for the story of the two sluggards who, when they went a-courting, tried to make a merit of their sloth; but Wolf notes the recurrence of something very similar

in other literatures, and it most likely reached Ruiz from France in some collection of supposititious Æsopic fables. The *Exemplo de lo que conteció á don Payas, pintor de Bretaña* —an indecent anecdote which follows immediately on the tale of the rival sluggards—betrays its *provenance* in its diction. Note the Gallicisms in such lines as:—

> Yo volo yr afrandes, portare muyta dona . . .
> Yo volo faser en vos vna bona fygura . . .
> Ella dis: monssener, faset vuestra mesura . . .
> dis la muger: monseñer, vos mesmo la catat . . .
> en dos anos petid corder non se faser carner. . . .

Can we doubt that these are free translations from a French original not yet identified? It is significant that, as the story of the Greek and the *ribaldo* reappears long afterwards in Rabelais, so the story of Don Payas reappears in Béroalde de Verville's *Le Moyen de parvenir* and in La Fontaine's salacious fable *Le Bât*:—

> Un peintre étoit, qui, jaloux de sa femme
> Allant aux champs, lui peignit un baudet
> Sur le nombril, en guise de cachet.

Again, compare the Archpriest's stanzas (already quoted) on the power of money with our English *Song in praise of Sir Penny*:—

> Go bet, Peny, go bet [go],
> For thee makyn bothe frynd and fo.
>
> Peny is a hardy knyght,
> Peny is mekyl of myght,
> Peny of wrong, he makyt ryght
> In every cuntré qwer he goo.
> [Go bet, etc.]

Ritson quotes a companion poem from 'a MS. of the 13th or 14th century, in the library of Berne':—

> Denier fait cortois de vilain,
> Denier fait de malade sain,

Denier sorprent le monde a plain,
Tot est en son commandement.

And no doubt he is right in supposing that these variants (together with the Archpriest's version) come from *Dom Argent*, a story—not, as Ritson thought, a *fableau*—given in extract by Le Grand d'Aussy in the third volume of the *Fabliaux, Contes, Fables et Romans du XII^e et du XIII^e siècle* published in 1829. Once more, take the story of the abstemious hermit who once got drunk, went from bad to worse, and finally fell into the hangman's hands. As Wolf points out, this episode was introduced earlier in the *Libro de Apolonio*; but the Archpriest develops it more fully, amalgamating the tale of *L'Eremite qui s'enyvra* with *L'Ermyte que le diable conchia du coc et de la geline*. Lastly, the combat between Don Carnal and Doña Quaresma is most brilliantly adapted from the *Bataille de Karesme et de Charnage*:—

Seignor, ge ne vos quier celer,
Uns fablel vueil renoveler
Qui lonc tens a esté perdus :
Onques mais Rois, ne Quens, ne Dus
N'oïrent de millor estoire,
Par ce l'ai-ge mis en mémoire.

But the Archpriest's genial reconstruction outdoes the original at every point. And this is even more emphatically true of *Pamphilus de Amore*, which also no doubt, like the *fableaux* and *contes*, drifted into Spain from France. At moments Juan Ruiz is content to be an admirable translator. Read, for instance, what Pamphilus says to Galatea in the First Act (sc. iv.) of the Latin play—

Alterius villa mea neptis mille salutes
Per me mandavit officiumque tibi :
Hec te cognoscit dictis et nomine tantum,
Et te, si locus est, ipsa videre cupit—

and compare it with Don Melón's address to Doña Endrina in the *Libro de buen amor*:—

> Señora, la mj sobrina, que en toledo seya,
> se vos encomjenda mucho, mjll saludes vos enbya;
> sy ovies lugar e tienpo, por quanto de vos oya,
> desea vos mucho ver e conosçer vos querria.

And you will find from thirty to forty points of resemblance duly noted in Sr. Puyol y Alonso's valuable study. But what does it matter if a more microscopic scrutiny reveals a hundred parallelisms? Ruiz proceeds as Shakespeare proceeded after him. He picks up waste scraps of base metal from a dunghill, and by his wonder-working touch transforms them into gold. He breathes life into the ghostly abstractions of the pseudonymous Auvergnat, creates a man and a woman in the stress of irresistible passion, and evokes a dramatic atmosphere. You read *Pamphilus de Amore*: you find it dull when it is not licentious, and you most often find it both dull and licentious at the same time. Not a solitary character, not a single happy line, not one memorable phrase remains with you to redeem its tedious pruriency. The Archpriest's two lovers are unforgettable: they are not saints—far from it!—but they are human in their weakness, and in their downfall they are the sympathetic victims of disaster. And the vitality of the other personage in this concentrated narrative of illicit love is proved by its persistence in literature. A feminine Tartufe, with a dangerous subtlety and perverse enjoyment of immorality for its own sake, Trotaconventos is the ancestress of Celestina, of Regnier's Macette, and of the hideous old nurse in *Romeo and Juliet*. Turn to the end of the *Libro de buen amor*, and observe the predatory figure of Don Furón: he, too, is unforgettable as the model of the ravenous fine gentleman who condescended to share Lazarillo's plate of trotters.

What matter if the Archpriest lays hands on a *fableau*, or a *conte*, or a wearisome piece of lubricity 'veiled in the obscurity of a learned language'? What matter if he pilfers from the *Libro de Alixandre*, or steals an idea from the *Roman de la Rose*? He makes his finds his own by right of conquest, like Catullus or Virgil before him, like Shakespeare and Molière after him.

The sedentary historian, like a housemaid, dearly loves a red coat, and tells us far more than we care to know of arms and the men, drums and trumpets, and the frippery of war. Juan Ruiz gives us something better: a tableau of society in Spain during the picturesque, tumultuous reigns of Alfonso XI. and Peter the Cruel. While other writers sought their material in monastic libraries, he was content with joyous observation in inns, and booths, and shady places. He mingled with the general crowd, having his preferences, but few exclusions. He does not, indeed, seem to have loved Jews—*pueblo de perdiçion*—but his heart went out with a bound to their wives and daughters. For Jewish and Moorish dancing-girls he wrote countless songs—not preserved, unfortunately—to be accompanied by Moorish music. So, also, he composed ditties to be sung by blind men, by roystering students, by vagrant picaroons, and other birds of night. He records these artistic exploits with an air of frank self-satisfaction:—

> Despues fise muchas cantigas de dança e troteras,
> para judias e moras e para entenderas,
> para en jnstrumentos de comunales maneras:
> el cantar que non sabes, oylo acantaderas.
>
> Cantares fis algunos de los que disen los siegos
> e para escolares que andan nochernjegos
> e para muchos otros por puertas andariegos,
> caçurros e de bulrras, non cabrian en dyes priegos.

Few men have anything to fear from their enemies, but

most are in danger of being made ridiculous by their admirers. Puymaigre was no blind eulogist, and yet in an unwary moment he suggests a dangerous comparison when he quotes the passage describing the emotion of Doña Endrina's lover on first meeting her:—

> Pero tal lugar non era para fablar en amores:
> amj luego me venjeron muchos mjedos e tenblores,
> los mis pies e las mjs manos non eran de si senores,
> perdi seso, perdi fuerça, mudaron se mjs colores.

And he ventures to place these lines beside the evocation in the *Vita Nuova*:—

> Tanto gentile e tanto onesta pare
> La donna mia quand' ella altrui saluta,
> Ch' ogni lingua divien tremando muta,
> E gli occhi non l'ardiscon di guardare.

The suggested parallel does little credit to Puymaigre's undoubted critical instinct. It is, moreover, damaging to the Archpriest who, in this particular passage, is simply translating from the First Act of *Pamphilus de Amore* (sc. iii.):—

> Quantus adesset ei nunc locus inde loqui!
> Sed dubito. Tanti michi nunc venere dolores!
> Nec mea vox mecum, nec mea verba manent,
> Nec michi sunt vires, trepidantque manusque pedesque.

Comparisons are odious, but, if they must be made, let us compare like to like. No breath of Dante's hushed rapture plays round the libidinous Archpriest. The Spaniard never stirs in his reader a flicker of mystic ardour; he is of the world, of the flesh, and sometimes of the devil; his realism is irrepressible, his view of human nature is cynical, and his interpretation is pregnant with a constant irony. But he enjoys life, such as it is, while he can. He gives us to understand that people and things are what they are because

they cannot be otherwise, and he makes the most of both by describing in a spirit of bacchantic pessimism the ludicrous spectacle of the world. Learning is most excellent, but the Archpriest finds as much wisdom in a *proverbio chico* as in the patter of the schools; a *cantar de gesta* has its place in the scheme of literature, for it lends itself to parody; soldiers slash their way to glory, but, though they fascinate the ordinary timorous literary man, the Archpriest sees through them, and humorously exhibits them as sharpers more punctual on pay-day than in the hour of battle. His whole book, and especially his catalogue—*De las propriedades que las dueñas chicas han*—bespeak an incurable susceptibility to feminine charm; but he leaves you under no delusion as to the seductiveness of the women on the hillsides:—

Las orejas mayores que de añal burrico,
el su pescueço negro, ancho, velloso, chico,
las narises muy gordas, luengas, de çarapico,
beueria en pocos djas cavdal de buhon rico.

He thinks nothing beneath his notice, takes you with him into convent-kitchens and lets you listen to Trota-conventos while she rattles off the untranslatable names of the dainties which mitigate the nuns' austerities:—

Comjnada, alixandria, conel buen diagargante,
el diaçitron abatys, con el fino gengibrante,
mjel rrosado, diaçimjnjo, diantioso va delante,
e la rroseta nouela que deujera desjr ante.
adraguea e alfenjque conel estomatricon,
e la garriofilota con dia margariton,
tria sandalix muy fyno con diasanturion,
que es, para doñear, preciado e noble don.

And, in the same precise way, he satisfies your intelligent curiosity as to musical instruments:—

araujgo non quiere la viuela de arco,
çinfonja, gujtarra non son de aqueste marco,

çitola, odreçillo non amar caguyl hallaço,
mas aman la tauerna e sotar con vellaco.
albogues e mandurria caramjllo e çanpolla
non se pagan de araujgo quanto dellos boloña. . . .

The medley is sometimes incoherent, but even when most diffuse it never fails to entertain. To us the vivid rendering of small, characteristic particulars is a source of delight. The Archpriest threw it off as a matter of course; but he piqued himself on the boldness of his metrical innovations, and he had good reason to be proud. Most of his verses are written in the quatrain of the *mester de clerecía*, or *quaderna vía*—an adaptation of the French alexandrine or 'fourteener'—but he imparts to the measure a new flexibility, and he attempts rhythmical experiments, moved by a desire to transplant to Castile the metrical devices which had already penetrated into Portugal and Galicia from Northern France and Provence. But the Archpriest has higher claims to distinction than any based on executive skill. He lends a distinct personal touch to all his subjects. He has an intense impression of the visible world, an imposing faculty of evocation, and what he saw we are privileged to see in his puissant and realistic transcription. Some modern Spaniards, with a show of indignation which seems quaint in countrymen of Cervantes and Quevedo, reject the notion that humour is a characteristic quality of the Spanish genius. We must bear these sputterings of storm with such equanimity as we can, and hope for finer weather. The fact remains: Juan Ruiz is the earliest of the great Spanish humourists; he is also the most eminent Spanish poet of the Middle Ages, and, all things considered, the most brilliant literary figure in Spanish history till the coming of Garcilaso de la Vega.

Those of you who have read *Carlos VI. en la Rápita*—one

of the latest volumes in the series of *Episodios Nacionales*—will call to mind another Juan Ruiz, likewise an Archpriest, known to his parishioners as 'Don Juanondón,' and you may remember that this Archpriest of Ulldecona quotes his namesake, the Archpriest of Hita:—

> Tu, Señora, da me agora
> la tu graçia toda ora,
> que te sirua toda vja.

As the *Libro de buen amor* had been in print for some seventy years before the Pretender made the laughable fiasco described by Pérez Galdós, it is quite possible that Don Juanondón had read the first of the *Goços de Santa Maria* in the supplement. But it is not very likely: for, though the Archpriest's poems are mentioned in an English book published nine years before they appeared in Spain,[1] they never were, and perhaps never will be, popular in the ordinary sense. Juan Ruiz was far in advance of his age. He lived and died obscure. No contemporary mentions him by name, and the only thing that can be construed into a rather early allusion is found in a poem by Ferrant Manuel de Lando in the *Cancionero de Baena* (No. 362):—

> Señor Juan Alfonso, pintor de taurique
> qual fue Pitas Payas, el de la fablilla.

But this, at the best, is indirect. Santillana merely refers to the Archpriest incidentally. Argote de Molina, in the next century, does indeed quote one of the Archpriest's *serranillas* (st. 1023-27); but he is misinformed as to the author, and ascribes the verses to a certain 'Domingo Abad

[1] In *Letters from an English Traveller in Spain, in* 1778, *on the origin and progress of Poetry in that Kingdom* (London, 1781). This work was published anonymously by John Talbot Dillon, who acknowledges his 'particular obligations' to the works of Luis José Velázquez, López de Sedano, and Sarmiento.

de los Romances' whose name occurs in the *Repartimiento de Sevilla*. Still there is evidence to prove that Juan Ruiz found a few readers fit to appreciate him. A fragment of his work exists in Portuguese; the great Chancellor, Pero López de Ayala, imitates him in the poem generally known as the *Rimado de Palacio*; Alfonso Martínez de Toledo, Archpriest of Talavera and a kindred spirit in some respects, speaks of him by name, and lays him under contribution in the *Reprobación del amor mundano*. The famous pander who lends her name to the *Celestina* is closely related to Trotaconventos, and Calixto and Melibea in that great masterpiece are developed from Don Melón de la Uerta and Doña Endrina de Calatayud. The Archpriest's influence on his successors is therefore undeniable. But, leaving this aside, and judging him solely by his immediate, positive achievement, he is not altogether unworthy to be placed near Chaucer,—the poet to whom he has been so often compared.

CHAPTER III

THE LITERARY COURT OF JUAN II.

The reign of Juan II. is one of the longest and most troubled in the history of Castile. In his second year he succeeded his father, Enrique *el Doliente*, at the end of 1406, and for almost half a century he was the sport of fortune. Enrique III.'s frail body was tenanted by a masterful spirit: his son was a puppet in the hands of favourites or of factions. Juan II.'s uncle Fernando de Antequera (so called from his brilliant campaign against the Moors in 1410, celebrated in the popular *romances*) acted as regent of Castile till he was called to the throne of Aragón in 1412, when the regency was assumed by the Queen-Mother, Catherine of Lancaster. The generosity of contemporaries and the gallantry of elderly historians lead them to judge Queen-Mothers with indulgence; but Catherine is admitted to have been a grotesque and incapable figurehead, controlled by Fernán Alonso de Robles, a clever upstart. Declared of age in 1419, Juan II. soon fell under the dominion of Álvaro de Luna, a young Aragonese who had come to court in 1408, and had therefore known the king from childhood. Raised to the high post of Constable of Castile, Álvaro de Luna resolved to crush the seditious nobles, and to make his master a sovereign in fact as well as in name. But the king was a weakling who could be bullied out of any resolution. Factious revolts were met with alternate savagery and weakness. Opportunities were thrown away. The victory over the Moors at La Higuera in 1431, and the rout

of the rebel nobles at Olmedo in 1445, failed to strengthen the royal authority. At a critical moment, when he seemed in a fair way to triumph, Álvaro de Luna made an irremediable mistake. In 1447 he promoted the marriage of Juan II. with Isabel of Portugal: she was 'the knife with which he cut his own throat.' At her suggestion the unstable Juan took a step which has earned for him a prominent place among the traitor-kings who have deserted their ministers in a moment of danger. Álvaro de Luna had fought a hard fight for thirty years. In 1453 he was suddenly thrown over, condemned, and beheaded amid the indecent mockery of his enemies:—

> Ca si lo ajeno tomé,
> lo mío me tomarán;
> si maté, non tardarán
> de matarme, bien lo sé.

So even the courtly Marqués de Santillana holds up his foe to derision, unconscious that his own death was not far off. In 1454 Juan II. died, and during the scandalous reign of Enrique IV. it might well seem that the great Constable had lived in vain. But his policy was destined to be carried out by 'the Catholic Kings,' Ferdinand and Isabel.

Contrary to reasonable expectation, the court of Juan II. remained a centre of culture during all the storm of civil war. Educated by the converted Rabbi Sh'lomoh Hallevi—better known to orthodox Spaniards as Pablo de Santa María, Chancellor of Castile,—Juan II. had something more than a tincture of artistic taste. So stern a judge as Pérez de Guzmán, who had no reason to treat him tenderly, describes him as a wit, an excellent musician, an assiduous reader, an amateur of literature, a lover and sound critic of poetry. Juan II. had in fact all the qualities which are useless to a king, and none of those which are indispensable.

He himself wrote minor poetry, a luxury in which no monarch less eminently successful than Frederic the Great can afford to indulge. From his youth he was surrounded by such representatives of the old school of poetry as Alfonso Álvarez de Villasandino. Castile might go to ruin, but there was always time to hear the compositions of this persistent mendicant, or those of Juan Alfonso de Baena, with the replies and rebutters of versifiers like Ferrant Manuel de Lando and Juan de Guzmán. It was no good training for either a poet or a king. In the few poems by Juan II. which have come down to us there is an occasional touch of laborious accomplishment: there is no depth of feeling, no momentary sincerity. Poetry had become the handmaid of luxury. Poetical tournaments and knightly jousts were both forms of court-pageantry. Nature was out of fashion; life was infected by artificiality, and literature by bookish conceits. 'Mesure est precioux tesmoing de san et de courtoisie,' according to the author of the thirteenth-century *Doctrinal*, and *mesura* and *cortesía* predominate in the courtly verse of Juan II.'s reign. The Galician *trovadores* brought into Castile the bad tradition which they had borrowed from Provence, and the emphatic genius of Castile accentuated rather than refined the verbal audacities of conventional gallantry. Macias *o Namorado*, the typical Galician *trovador* who died about 1390, had dared to introduce the words of Christ Crucified as the tag of an amatory lyric:—

Pois me faleceu ventura
en o tempo de prazer,
non espero aver folgura
mas por sempre entristecer.
Turmentado e con tristura
chamarei ora por mi.
Deus meus, eli, eli,
eli lama sabac thani.

And shortly after the death of Macias another literary force came into play. As Professor Henry R. Lang observes in a note to his invaluable *Cancioneiro gallego-castelhano*, 'the Italian Renaissance had taught the poet to combine myth and miracle and to pay homage to the fair lady in the language of religion as well as in that of feudal life.' The conventions of chivalry were combined with the expressions of sacrilegious passion. So eminent a man as Álvaro de Luna set a lamentable example of impious preciosity. In one of his extant poems he belauds his mistress, declares that the Saviour's choice would light on her if He were subject to mortal passions, and defiantly announces his readiness to contend with God in the lists—to break a lance with the Almighty—for so incomparable a prize :—

Aun se m'antoxa, Senyor,
si esta tema tomáras
que justar e quebrar varas
fiçieras por el su amor.
Si fueras mantenedor,
contigo me las pegara,
e non te alçara la vara,
por ser mi competidor.

This is not an isolated instance of profanity in high places, for Álvaro de Luna's repugnant performance was equalled in the *Letanía de Amor* by the grave chronicler Diego de Valera, and was approached in innumerable copies of verse by many professed believers. The abundance of versifiers during the reign of Juan II. is embarrassing. In the *Ilustraciones* to the sixth volume of his *Historia de la literatura española*, José Amador de los Ríos gives two lists of poets who flourished at this period, and (allowing for the accidental inclusion of three names in both lists) he arrives at a total of two hundred and fifteen. Even so, it seems that the catalogue is incomplete; but we should thank Ríos for his

good taste, forbearance, or negligence in not making it exhaustive. It is extremely doubtful whether two hundred and fifteen poets of superlative distinction can be found in all the literatures of Europe put together; it is certain that no such number of distinguished poets has ever existed at one time in any one country, and many of the entries in Ríos's lists are the names of mediocrities, not to say poetasters. We may exclude them from our breathless review this afternoon, just as we must pass hurriedly over the names of minor prose-writers. There is merit in Álvaro de Luna's *Libro de las virtuosas e claras mugeres* in which the Constable replies to Boccaccio's *Corbaccio* and takes up the cudgels for women; there is uncommon merit in a venomous and amusing treatise, branding the entire sex, by Juan II.'s chaplain, Alfonso Martínez de Toledo—a work which he wished to be called (after himself) the *Arcipreste de Talavera,* but to which a mischievous posterity has attached the title of *El Corbacho* or the *Reprobación del amor mundano.* There is merit also in the allegorical *Visión delectable* of Alfonso de la Torre, and in the animated (though perhaps too imaginative) narrative of adventures given by Gutierre Díez de Games in the *Crónica del Conde de Buelna, Don Pero Niño.* And no account of the writers of Juan II.'s reign would be complete without some mention of the celebrated Bishop of Ávila, Alfonso de Madrigal, best known as *El Tostado.* But *El Tostado* wrote mostly in Latin, and, apart from this, his incredible productivity weighs upon him.

> Es muy cierto que escrivió
> para cada día tres pliegos
> de los días que vivió:
> su doctrina assi alumbró
> que haze ver á los ciegos.

We must be satisfied to quote this epitaph written on *El*

Tostado by Suero del Águila, and hurry on as we may, blinder than the blind. When all is said, the importance of *El Tostado* and the rest is purely relative. We need only concern ourselves with the more significant figures of the time, and this select company will occupy the time at our disposal.

One of the most striking personalities of Juan II.'s reign was Enrique de Villena, wrongly known as the Marqués de Villena. Born in 1384, he owes much of his posthumous renown to his reputation as a wizard, and to the burning of part of his library by the king's confessor, the Dominican Fray Lope Barrientos, afterwards successively Bishop of Segovia (1438), Ávila (1442), and Cuenca (1445). Barrientos has been roughly handled ever since Juan de Mena, without naming him, first applied the branding-iron in *El Laberinto de Fortuna*:—

> O ynclito sabio, auctor muy çiente,
> otra é avn otra vegada yo lloro
> porque Castilla perdió tal tesoro,
> non conoçido delante la gente.
>
> Perdió los tus libros sin ser conoçidos,
> e como en esequias te fueron ya luego
> vnos metidos al auido fuego,
> otros sin orden non bien repartidos.

Barrientos, however, seems to have been made a scapegoat in this matter. He asserts that he acted on the express order of Juan II., and, in any case, we may feel tolerably sure that he burned as few books as possible, for he kept what was saved for himself. However this may be, owing to his supposed dealings with the devil and the alleged destruction of his library after his death, Villena's name meets us at almost every turn in Spanish literature: in Quevedo's *La Visita de los chistes*, in Ruiz de Alarcón's *La*

Cueva de Salamanca, in Rojas Zorrilla's *Lo que quería ver el Marqués de Villena,* and in Hartzenbusch's *La Redoma encantada.* These presentations of the imaginary necromancer are interesting in their way, but we have in *Generaciones y Semblanzas* a portrait of the real Villena done by the hand of a master. There we see him—'short and podgy, with pink and white cheeks, a huge eater, and greatly addicted to lady-killing; some said derisively that he knew a vast deal of the heavens above, and little of the earth beneath; alien and remote from practical affairs, and in the management of his household and estate so incapable and helpless that it was a wonder manifold.' Yet Pérez de Guzmán is too keen-eyed to miss Villena's intellectual gifts. From him we learn that, at an age when other lads are dragged reluctantly to school, Villena set himself to study without a master, and in direct opposition to the wishes of his grandfather and family, showing 'such subtle and lofty talent that he speedily mastered whatever science or art to which he applied himself, so that it really seemed innate in him by nature.' Here we have the man set before us—vaguely recalling the figure of Gibbon, but a Gibbon who has left behind him nothing to represent his rare abilities.

It must be confessed that Villena owes more of his celebrity to his legend than to his literary work. Perhaps the nearest parallel to him in our own history is Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester. Both were fired by the enthusiasm of the Renaissance; both were patrons of literature; both were popularly supposed to practise the black art—Villena in person, and Gloucester through the intermediary of his wife, Eleanor Cobham. But, while Duke Humphrey was content to give copies of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio to the University of Oxford, Villena took an active part in spreading the light that came from Italy. He was not the

first Spaniard in the field. Francisco Imperial, in his *Dezir de las siete virtudes,* had already hailed Dante as his guide and master, and had borrowed phrases from the *Divina Commedia.* Thus when Dante writes—

> O somma luz, che tanto ti levi
> dai concetti mortali, alla mia mente
> ripresta un poco di quel che parevi—

Imperial transfers these lines from the *Paradiso* to his own page in this form :—

> O suma luz, que tanto te alçaste
> del concepto mortal, á mi memoria
> represta un poco lo que me mostraste.

This is rather close translation; but students, more interested in matter than in form, asked for a complete rendering. Villena was already at work on the *Æneid*; at the suggestion of Santillana, he further undertook to translate the *Divina Commedia* into Castilian prose. His diligence was equal to his intrepidity. Begun on September 28, 1427, his translation of Virgil was finished on October 10, 1428, and before this date he had finished his translation of Dante. These prose versions are Villena's most useful contributions to literature. With the exception of the *Arte cisoria*—a prose pæan on eating which would have attracted Brillat-Savarin, and which confirms Pérez de Guzmán's report concerning the author's gormandising habits—his extant original writings are of small value. Pérez de Guzmán, Mena, and Santillana speak of him with respect as a poet, and, as Argote de Molina mentions his 'coplas y canciones de muy gracioso donayre,' it is evident that Villena's verses were read with pleasure as late as 1575 when the *Conde Lucanor* was first printed. But they have not reached us, and perhaps the world is not much the poorer for the loss.

Still, we cannot feel at all sure of this. Villena showed some promise in *Los Trabajos de Hércules*, and ended by becoming one of the clumsiest prose writers in the world; yet Mena exists to remind us that a man who writes detestable prose may have in him the breath of a true poet.

Judged by the vulgar test of success, Villena's career was a failure, and a failure which involved him in dishonour. He did not obtain the marquessate of Villena, and, though inaccurate writers and the general public may insist on calling him the Marqués de Villena, the fact remains that he was nothing of the kind. He had set his heart on becoming Constable of Castile, and this ambition was also baulked. He winked at the adultery of his wife with Enrique III. and connived at her obtaining a decree of nullity on the ground that he was impotent—a statement ludicrously and notoriously untrue of one whom Pérez de Guzmán describes as 'muy inclinado al amor de las mugeres.' Enrique *el Doliente* rewarded the complaisant husband by conferring on him the countship of Cangas de Tineo and the Grand Mastership of the Order of Calatrava; but he was unable to take possession of his countship, was chased from the Mastership by the Knights of the Order, and remained empty-handed and scorned as a pretentious scholar who had not even known how to secure the wages of sin. Meekly bowing under the burden of his shame, Villena retired to his estate of Iniesta or Torralba—two petty morsels of what had once been a rich patrimony—and there passed most of his last years working at his translations or miscellaneous treatises, and dabbling in alchemy. He had once hoped to reach some of the highest positions in the state; in his obscurity, his heart leapt up when he beheld a turkey or a partridge on his table, and he speaks of these toothsome birds with a glow of epicurean eloquence. But

his ill luck pursued him even in his pleasures. His gluttony and sedentary habits brought on repeated attacks of gout, and he died prematurely at Madrid on December 15, 1434. As a man of letters he is remarkable rather for his industry than for his performance. But there is a certain picturesqueness about this enigmatic and rather futile personage which invests him with a singular interest. It is not often that a great noble who stands so near the throne cultivates learning with steadfast zeal. In collecting manuscripts and texts Villena set an example which was followed by Santillana, and by Luis de Guzmán, a later and more fortunate Master of the Order of Calatrava. We cannot doubt that, in his own undisciplined way, Villena loved literature and things of the mind, and that by personal effort and by patronage he helped a good cause which has never had too many friends.

A man of stronger fibre, nobler character, and far greater achievement was Fernán Pérez de Guzmán, the nephew of the great Chancellor Pero López de Ayala, and the uncle of Santillana. From a worldly point of view, he, too, may be said to have wrecked his career; but the charge of obsequiousness is the last that can be brought against him. He was not of the stuff of which courtiers are made; his haughty temper brought him into collision with Álvaro de Luna, whom he detested; some of his relatives were in arms against Juan II., and this circumstance, together with his uncompromising spirit, threw suspicion on his personal loyalty to the throne. Such a man could not fail to make enemies, and amongst those who intrigued against him we may probably count that inventive busybody Pedro del Corral, whose *Crónica Sarrazyna* he afterwards described bluntly as a 'mentira ó trufa paladina.' After a violent scene with Álvaro de Luna, Pérez de Guzmán was arrested together

with many of his sympathisers. On his release, though not much past middle life, he closed the gates of preferment on himself by withdrawing to his estate of Batres, and thenceforth, like Villena, he sought in literature some consolation for his disappointment. He had a most noble passion for fame, and he won it with his pen, when fate compelled him to sheathe his sword.

Any one who takes up the poem entitled *Loores de los claros varones de España* and lights upon the unhappy passage in which Virgil is condemned for tricking out his wishy-washy stuff with verbose ornament—

> la poca é pobre sustancia
> con verbosidad ornando—

is likely to be prejudiced against Pérez de Guzmán, and is certain to think poorly of his judgment as a literary critic. It is not as a literary critic that Pérez de Guzmán excels, nor is he a poet of any striking distinction; but as a painter of historical portraits he has rarely been surpassed. In the first place, he can see; in the second, he writes with a pen, and not with a stick. He is an excellent judge of character and motive, and he is no respecter of persons—a greater thing to say than you might think, for as a rule it is not till long after kings and statesmen are in their graves that the whole truth about them is set down. And it is the truthfulness of the record which makes Pérez de Guzmán's *Generaciones y Semblanzas* at once so impressive and entertaining. There is no touch of sentimentalism in his nature; rank and sex form no claim to his indulgence; he is naturally prone to crush the mighty and to spare the weak. If a queen is unseemly in her habits, he notes the fact laconically; if a Constable of Castile foolishly consults soothsayers, this weakness is recorded side by side with his good qualities; if an

Archbishop of Toledo favours his relatives in little matters of ecclesiastical preferment, this amiable family feeling is set off against other characteristics more congruous to his position; if an *Adelantado Mayor* has a bright bald head and pulls the long bow when he drops into anecdotage, these peculiarities are not forgotten when he comes up for sentence. There is no rhetoric, no waste: the person concerned is brought forward at the right moment, described in a few trenchant words, and discharged with a stain on his character. The *Generaciones y Semblanzas* is not the work of an 'impersonal' historian who is most often a sophist arguing, for the sake of argument, that black is not so unlike white as the plain man imagines. Pérez de Guzmán goes with his party, has his prejudices, his likes and dislikes, and he makes no attempt to dissemble them; but he is never deliberately unfair. The worst you can say of him is that he is a hanging judge. He may be: but the phrase in which he sums up is always memorable for picturesque vigour.

He is believed to have died in 1460 at about the age of eighty-four, and in any case he outlived his nephew Íñigo López de Mendoza, who is always spoken of as the Marqués de Santillana, a title conferred on him after the battle of Olmedo in 1445. In 1414, being then a boy of eighteen, Santillana first comes into sight at the *jochs florals* over which Villena presided when Fernando de Antequera was crowned King of Aragón; and thenceforward, till his death in 1458, Santillana is a prominent figure on the stage of history. His father was Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, Lord High Admiral of Castile; his mother was Leonor de la Vega, superior to most men of her time, or of any time, in ability, courage and determination. On both sides, he inherited position, wealth, and literary traditions, and he utilised to

the utmost his advantages. He was no absent-minded dreamer: even in practical matters his success was striking. During his long minority, his mother's crafty bravery had protected much of his estate from predatory relatives. Santillana increased it, timing his political variations with a perfect opportuneness. Beginning public life as a supporter of the Infantes of Aragón, he deserted to Juan II. in 1429, and, when the property of the Infantes was confiscated some five years later, he shared in the spoil. Alienated by Álvaro de Luna's methods, he veered round again in 1441, and took the field against Juan II.; once more he was reconciled, and his services at Olmedo were rewarded by a marquessate and further grants of land. Apparently his nearest approach to a political conviction was a hatred of Álvaro de Luna in whose ruin he was actively concerned; but Santillana was always on the safe side, and, before declaring openly against Luna, he provided against failure by marrying his eldest son to the Constable's niece.

Baldly told, and without the extenuating pleas which partisanship can furnish, the story of those profitable manœuvres leaves an unfavourable impression, which is deepened by Santillana's vindictive exultation over Álvaro de Luna in the *Doctrinal de privados*. But we cannot expect generosity from a politician who has felt for years that his head was not safe upon his shoulders. Yet Santillana's personality was engaging; he illustrated the old Spanish proverb which he himself records: 'Lance never blunted pen, nor pen lance.' He made comparatively few enemies while he lived, and all the world has combined to praise him since his death in 1458. The slippery intriguer is forgotten; the figure of the knight who appeared in the lists with *Ave Maria* on his shield has grown dim. But as a poet, as a patron of litera-

ture, as the friend of Mena, as a type of the lettered noble during the early Renaissance in Spain, Santillana is remembered as he deserves to be.

He had a taste for the dignity as well as for the pomps of life. If he entertained the King and arranged tourneys, he was careful to surround himself with men of letters. His chaplain, Pedro Díaz de Toledo, translated the *Phaedo*; his secretary, Diego de Burgos, was a poet who imitated Santillana, and commemorated him in the *Triunfo del Marqués*. But Santillana was not a scholar, and made no pretension to be one. He knew no Greek, and he says that he never learned Latin. This is not mock-modesty, for his statement is corroborated by his contemporary, Juan de Lucena. He tried to make good his deficiencies, airs a Latin quotation now and then, and must have spelled his way through Horace, for he has left a pleasing version of the ode *Beatus ille*. Late in life, he is thought to have read part of Homer in a Spanish translation probably made (through a Latin rendering) by his son Pedro González de Mendoza, the 'Gran Cardenal de España,' the Tertius Rex who ruled almost on terms of equality with Ferdinand and Isabel. Whatever his shortcomings, Santillana's admiration for classic authors was complete. He caused translations to be made of Virgil, Ovid and Seneca, and records his view that the word 'sublime' should be applied solely to 'those who wrote their works in Greek or Latin metres.' His interest in learning and his wide general culture are beyond dispute. His library contained the *Roman de la Rose*, the works of Guillaume de Machault, of Oton de Granson, and of Alain Chartier whom he singles out for special praise as the author of *La Belle dame sans merci* and the *Reveil Matin*—'por çierto cosas assaz fermosas é plaçientes de oyr.' He appeals to the authority of Raimon Vidal, to Jaufré de

Foixá's continuation of Vidal, and to the rules laid down by the Consistory of the Gay Science; and, if we may believe the lively *Coplas de la Panadera,* he carried his liking for all things French so far as to appear on the battlefield of Olmedo

armado como francés.

He had a still deeper admiration for the great Italian masters. In the preface to his *Comedieta de Ponza,* which describes the rout of the allied fleets of Castile and Aragón by the Genoese in 1435, Boccaccio is one of the interlocutors. There is a patent resemblance between Santillana's *Triunphete de Amor* and the *Trionfi* of Petrarch, who is mentioned in the first quatrain of the poem :—

Vi lo que persona humana
tengo que jamás non vió,
nin Petrarcha qu' escrivió
de triunphal gloria mundana.

But Dante naturally has the foremost place in Santillana's library. Boccaccio's biography of the poet stands on the shelves with the *Divina Commedia,* the *Canzoni della vita nuova,* and the *Convivio.* Without Dante we should not have Santillana's *Sueño,* nor *La Coronación de Mossén Jordi,* nor *La Comedieta de Ponza,* nor the *Diálogo de Bias contra Fortuna*: at any rate, we should not have them in their actual forms. Nor should we have *El Infierno de los Enamorados,* in which Santillana invites a dangerous comparison by adapting to the circumstances of Macías *o Namorado* the plaint of Francesca :—

La mayor cuyta que aver
puede ningun amador
es membrarse del plaçer
en el tiempo del dolor.

It is not, however, as an imitator of Dante that Santillana

interests us. He himself was perhaps most proud of his attempt to naturalise the sonnet form in Spain; but these forty-two sonnets, *fechos al itálico modo* in Petrarch's manner, are little more than curious, premature experiments. And, as I have already suggested, the passion of hate concentrated in the *Doctrinal de privados* is incommunicative at a distance of some four centuries and a half. Santillana attains real excellence in a very different vein. His natural lyrism finds almost magical expression in the *serranillas* of which *La Vaquera de la Finojosa* is the most celebrated example, and in the airy *dezires* which show his relation to the Portuguese-Galician school. Indeed he has left us one song—

> Por amar non saybamente
> mays como louco sirvente—

which Sr. Menéndez y Pelayo believes to be 'one of the last composed in Galician by a Castilian *trovador*.' In these popular or semi-pastoral lays, so apparently artless and so artfully ironical, Santillana has never been surpassed by any Spanish poet, though he is closely pressed by the anonymous writer of the striking *serranilla morisca* beginning—

> ¡ Si ganada es Antequera !
> ¡ Oxalá Granada fuera !
> ¡ Sí me levantara un dia
> por mirar bien Antequera !
> vy mora con ossadía
> passear por la rivera—

and still more closely by the many-sided Lope de Vega in the famous barcarolle in *El Vaquero de Moraña*.

More learned, more professional and less spontaneous than Santillana, his friend Juan de Mena was in his place as secretary to Juan II. We know little of him except that he was born at Córdoba in 1411, that his youth was passed in

poverty, that his studies began late, that he travelled in Italy, and that, after his introduction at court, he was a universal favourite till his death in 1456. Universal favourites are apt to be men of supple character, and it must have needed some dexterity to stand equally well with Álvaro de Luna and Santillana. Perhaps a Spaniard is entitled to be judged by the Spanish code, and Spaniards seem to regard Mena as a man of independent spirit. But it is unfortunate that our national standards in such matters differ so widely: for the question of Mena's personal character bears on the ascription to him of certain verses which no courtier could have written.

With the disputable exception of Villena, Juan de Mena is the worst prose-writer in the Spanish language, and no one can doubt the justice of this verdict who glances at Mena's commentary on his own poem *La Coronación*, or at his abridged version of the *Iliad* as he found it in the *Ilias latina* of Italicus. These lumbering performances are fatal to the theory that Mena wrote the *Crónica de Don Juan II.*, a good specimen of clear and fluent prose. The ponderous humour of the verses which he meant to be light is equally fatal to the theory that he wrote the *Coplas de la Panadera*, a political pasquinade—not unlike *The Rolliad*—ascribed with much more probability by Argote de Molina to Íñigo Ortiz de Stúñiga. Till very recently, there was a bad habit of ascribing to Mena anonymous compositions written during his life—and even afterwards. But this is at an end, and we shall hear little more of Mena as the author of the *Crónica de Juan II.*, of the *Coplas de la Panadera*, and of the *Celestina*. Henceforward attributions will be based on some reasonable ground.

Mena had an almost superstitious reverence for the classics, and describes the *Iliad* as 'a holy and seraphic

work.' Unfortunately he is embarrassed by his learning, or rather by a deliberate pedantry which is even more offensive now than it was in his day. It takes a poet as great as Milton to carry off a burden of erudition, and Mena was no Milton. But he was a poet of high aims, and he produced a genuinely impressive allegorical poem in *El Laberinto de Fortuna,* more commonly known as *Las Trezientas.* The explanation of this popular title is simple. The poem in its original form consisted of nearly three hundred stanzas—297 to be precise—and another hand has added three more, no doubt to make the poem correspond exactly to its current title. Some of you may remember the story of Juan II.'s asking Mena to write sixty-five more stanzas so that there might be one for every day in the year; and the poet is said to have died leaving only twenty-four of these additional stanzas behind him. This is quite a respectable tradition as traditions go, for it is recorded by the celebrated commentator Hernán Núñez, who wrote within half a century of the poet's death. We cannot, of course, know what Juan II. said, or did not say, to Mena; but the twenty-four stanzas are in existence, and the internal evidence goes to show that they were written after Mena's time. They deal severely with the King—the 'prepotente señor' of whom Mena always speaks, as a court poet must speak, in terms of effusive compliment. Here, however, the question of character arises, and, as I have already noted, Spaniards and foreigners are at variance.

Thanks to M. Foulché-Delbosc, we are all of us at last able to read *El Laberinto de Fortuna* in a critical edition, and to study the history of the text reconstructed for us by the most indefatigable and exact scholar now working in the field of Spanish literature. It has been denied that *El Laberinto de Fortuna* owes anything to the *Divina*

Commedia. The influence of Dante is plain in the adoption of the seven planetary circles, in the fording of the stream, in the vision of what was, and is, and is to be. The *Laberinto* contains reminiscences of the *Roman de la Rose,* and passages freely translated from Mena's fellow-townsman Lucan. It is derivative, and, though comparatively short, it is often tedious. But are not most allegorical poems tedious? Macaulay has been reproached for saying that few readers are 'in at the death of the Blatant Beast': the fact being that Macaulay's wonderful memory failed for once. The Blatant Beast was never killed. But how many educated men, how many professional literary critics, can truthfully say that they have read the whole of the *Faerie Queene*? How many of these few are prepared to have their knowledge tested? I notice that, now as always, a significant silence follows these innocent questions; and, merely pausing to observe that there are two cantos on Mutability to read after the Blatant Beast breaks 'his yron chaine' in the Sixth Book, I pass on.

The *Laberinto,* with its constant over-emphasis, is not to be compared with the *Faerie Queene*; but it has passages of stately beauty, it breathes a passionate pride in the glory of Castile, and, while the poet does all that metrical skill can do to lessen the monotonous throb of the *versos de arte mayor,* he also strives to endow Spain with a new poetic diction. Mena thought meanly of the vernacular—*el rudo y desierto romance*—as a vehicle of expression, and he was logically driven to innovate. He failed, partly because he latinised to excess; yet many of his novelties—*diáfano* and *nítido,* for example—are now part and parcel of the language, and many more deserved a better fate than death by ridicule. Like Herrera, who attempted a similar reform in the next century, Mena was too far in advance of his contemporaries;

but this is not necessarily a sign of unintelligence. Mena was too closely wedded to his classical idols to develop into a great poet; still, at his happiest, he is a poet of real impressiveness, and his command of exalted rhetoric and resonant music enable him to represent—better even than Góngora, a far more splendid artist—the characteristic tradition of the poetical school of Córdoba.

I must find time to say a few words about Juan Rodríguez de la Cámara (also called, after his supposed birthplace in Galicia, Rodríguez del Padrón), whose few scattered poems are mostly love-songs, less scandalous than might be expected from such alarming titles as *Los Mandamientos de Amor* and *Siete Gozos de Amor*. Nothing in these amatory lyrics is so attractive as the legend which has formed round their author. He is supposed to have served in the household of Cardinal Juan de Cervantes about the year 1434, to have travelled in Italy and in the East, to have been page to Juan II., to have become entangled at court in some perilous amour, to have brought about a breach by his indiscreet revelations to a talkative friend, to have fled into solitude, and to have become a Franciscan monk. Some such story is adumbrated in Rodríguez de la Cámara's novel *El Siervo libre de Amor*, and the romantic part of it—the love-episode—is confirmed by the official chronicler of the Franciscan Order. An anonymous writer of the sixteenth century goes on to state that Rodríguez de la Cámara went to France, became the lover of the French queen, and was killed near Calais in an attempt to escape to England. The imaginative nature of this postscript discredits the writer's assertion that Rodríguez de la Cámara's mistress at the Spanish court was Queen Juana, the second wife of Juan II.'s son, Enrique IV. Rightly or wrongly, Juana of Portugal is credited with many lovers, but Rodríguez de la Cámara

was certainly not one of them. As *El Siervo libre de Amor* was written not later than 1439, the adventures recounted in it must have occurred—if they ever occurred at all—before this date; but the future Enrique IV. was first married in 1440 (to Blanca of Navarre), and his second marriage (to Juana of Portugal) did not take place till 1455. A simple comparison of dates is enough to ensure Juana's acquittal. Few people like to see a scandalous story about historical personages destroyed in this cold-blooded way, and it has accordingly been suggested that the heroine was Juan II.'s second wife, the Isabel of Portugal who brought Álvaro de Luna to the scaffold. The substitution is capricious, but it has a plausible air. Chronology, again, comes to the rescue. Rodríguez de la Cámara became a monk before 1445, and Isabel of Portugal did not marry Juan II. till 1447. The identity of the lady is even harder to establish than that of the elusive Portuguese beauty celebrated during the next century by Bernardim de Ribeiro in *Menina e Moça.*

There are scores of Spanish books which you may read more profitably than Rodríguez de la Cámara's novels, *El Siervo libre de Amor* and the *Estoria de los dos amadores, Ardanlier é Liessa*; and better verses than any he ever wrote may be found in the *Cancionero* of Juan Alfonso de Baena, who formed this *corpus poeticum* at some date previous to the death of Queen María, Juan II.'s first wife, in 1445. But Rodríguez de la Cámara has the distinction of being the first courtly poet to put his name to a *romance.* One of the three which he signs, and which were first brought to light by Professor Rennert, is a recast of a famous *romance* on Count Arnaldos. He was not the only court-poet of his time who condescended to write in the popular vein. Two *romances,* one of them bearing the date 1442, are given in the *Cancionero de Stúñiga* above the name of Carvajal who,

as he resided at the court of Alfonso v. of Aragón in Naples, is outside the limits of our jurisdiction. But the best *romances*, the work of anonymous poets disdained by Santillana and more learned writers, will afford matter for another lecture.

CHAPTER IV

THE *ROMANCERO*

THE *Romancero* has been described, in a phrase attributed to Lope de Vega, as 'an *Iliad* without a Homer.' More prosaically, it is a collection of *romances*; and, before going further, it may be as well to observe that the meaning of the word *romance* has become much restricted in course of time. Originally used to designate the varieties of speech derived from Latin, it was applied later only to the body of written literature in the different vernaculars of Romania, and then, by another limitation, it was applied solely to poems written in these languages. Lastly, the meaning of the word was still further narrowed in Spanish, and a *romance* has now come to mean a special form of verse-composition —an epical-lyric poem arranged primarily in lines of sixteen syllables with one assonance sustained throughout. There are occasional variants from the type. Some few *romances* have a refrain; in some of the oldest *romances* there is a change of assonance: but the normal form of the genuine popular *romances* is what I have just described it to be. There should be no mistake on this point, and yet a mistake may easily be made. Though the metrical structure of these popular Spanish ballads had been demonstrated as far back as 1815 by Grimm in his *Silva de romances viejos*, so good a scholar as Agustín Durán— to whom we owe the largest existing collection of *romances* —has printed them in such a shape as to give the impression

that they were written in octosyllabics of which only the even lines (2, 4, 6, 8, etc.) are assonanced. Moreover, he expounds this theory in his *Discurso preliminar*, and his view is supported by the high authority of Wolf.[1] Still, it cannot be maintained. It is undoubtedly true that the later artistic ballads of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, written by professional poets like Lope de Vega and Góngora, were composed in the form which Durán describes. We are not concerned this afternoon, however, with these brilliant artificial imitations, but with the authentic, primitive ballads of the people. These old Spanish *romances*, I repeat, are written normally in lines of sixteen syllables, every line ending in a uniform assonance. They should be printed so as to make this clear, and indeed they are so printed by the celebrated scholar Antonio de Nebrija who, in his *Gramática sobre la lengua castellana* (1492), quotes three lines from one of the Lancelot ballads:—

> Digas tu el ermitaño que hazes la vida santa:
> Aquel ciervo del pie blanco donde haze su morada.
> Por aqui passo esta noche un hora antes del alva.

There are other erroneous theories respecting the *romances* against which you should be warned at the outset. Sancho Panza, in his pleasant way, informed the Duchess that these ballads were 'too old to lie'; but he gives no particulars as to their age, and thereby shows his wisdom. Most English readers who are not specialists take their information on the

[1] *Romancero General, ó Colección de romances castellanos anteriores al siglo XVIII. recogidos, ordenados, clasificados y anotados por Don Agustín Durán* (Madrid, 1849-1851). This collection forms vol. x. and vol. xvi. of the *Biblioteca de Autores Españoles.*

Primavera y Flor de romances publicada con una introducción y notas por D. Fernando José Wolf y D. Conrado Hofmann (Berlin, 1856).

Throughout the present lecture the references to the *Primavera* are to the second enlarged edition issued by Sr. Menéndez y Pelayo at Madrid in 1899-1900.

subject from Lockhart's Introduction to his *Ancient Spanish Ballads,* a volume containing free translations of fifty-three *romances,* published in 1823. Lockhart, who drew most of his material from Depping,[1] probably knew as much about the matter as any one of his time in England; but, though we move slowly in our Spanish studies, we make some progress, and Lockhart's opinions on certain points relating to the *romances* are no longer tenable. He notes, for example, that the *Cancionero general* contains 'several pieces which bear the name of Don Juan Manuel,' identifies this writer with the author of the *Conde Lucanor*, states that these pieces 'are among the most modern in the collection,' and naturally concludes that most of the remaining pieces must have been written long before 1348, the year of Don Juan Manuel's death. Lockhart goes on to observe that the Moors undoubtedly exerted 'great and remarkable influence over Spanish thought and feeling — and therefore over Spanish language and poetry'; and, though he does not say so in precise terms, he leaves the impression that this reputed Arabic influence is visible in the Spanish *romances.* These views, widely held in Lockhart's day, are now abandoned by all competent scholars; but unfortunately they still prevail among the general public.

Milá y Fontanals, who incidentally informs us that Corneille was the first foreigner to quote a Spanish *romance,*[2] states that these theories as to the antiquity and Arabic origin of the *romances* were first advanced by another foreigner—

[1] *Sammlung der besten alten Spanischen Historischen, Ritter- und Maurischen Romanzen. Geordnet und mit Anmerkungen und einer Einleitung versehen von Ch. B. Depping* (Altenburg und Leipzig, 1817).

[2] In the *Avertissement* to *Le Cid* (editions of 1648-56), Corneille quotes two ballads from the *Romancero general*:

(*a*) Delante el rey de León Doña Jimena una tarde . . .
(*b*) Á Jimena y á Rodrigo prendió el rey palabra y mano.

They are given in Durán, Nos. 735 and 739.

Pierre-Daniel Huet, Bishop of Avranches—towards the end of the seventeenth century.[1] But they made little way till 1820, when the theory of Arabic origin was confidently reiterated by Conde in his *Historia de la dominación de los árabes en España.* Conde's scholarship has been declared inadequate by later Orientalists, and the rest of us must be content to accept the verdict of these experts who alone have any right to an opinion on the matter. But it cannot be disputed that Conde had the knack of presenting a case plausibly, and of passing off a conjecture for a fact. Hence he made many converts who perhaps exaggerated his views. It is just possible—though unlikely—that there may be some slight relation between an Arabic *zajal* and such a Spanish composition as the *serranilla* quoted in the last lecture:—

¡ Sí ganada es Antequera !
¡ Oxalá Granada fuera !
¡ Sí me levantara un dia
por mirar bien Antequera !
vy mora con ossadía
passear por la rivera.
Sola va, sin compannera,
en garnachas de un contray.
Yo le dixe : '*Alá çulay.*'—
'*Calema,*' me respondiera.

But, in the first place, a *serranilla* is not a *romance*; and, in the second place, a more probable counter-theory derives the *serranilla* form from the Portuguese-Galician lyrics which are themselves of French origin. Beyond this very disputable relation, there is no basis for Conde's theory. Dozy has shown conclusively that nothing could be more unlike than the elaborately learned conventions of Arabic verse and

[1] *Traitté de l'origine des romans*, preceding Segrais' *Zayde, Histoire Espagnole* (Paris, 1671), p. 51.

the untutored methods of the Spanish *romances*, the artless expression of spontaneous popular poetry. It may be taken as established that there is no trace of Arabic influence in the *romances*, and there is no sound reason for thinking that any existing *romance* is of remote antiquity. So far from there being many extant specimens dating from before the time of Don Juan Manuel, there are none. What some have believed to be the oldest known *romance*—

Alburquerque, Alburquerque, bien mereces ser honrado[1]—

refers to an incident which occurred in 1430, almost a century after Don Juan Manuel's death; and even if we take for granted that one of the *romances fronterizos* or border-ballads—

Cercada tiene á Baeza ese arráez Audalla Mir[2]—

was first written as early as 1368, we are still twenty years after Don Juan Manuel's time. There may be *romances* which in their original form were written before these two; but, if so, they are unrecognisable. The authentic *romances* lived only in oral tradition; they were not thought worth writing down, and they were not printed till late in the day. The older a *romance* is, the more unlikely it is to reach us unchanged. No existing *romance*, in its present form, can be referred to any period earlier than the fifteenth century, and *romances* of this date are comparatively rare.

The first to mention this class of composition is Santillana in his well-known letter to the Constable of Portugal written shortly before 1450, and he dismisses the popular balladists with all the disdain of a gentleman who writes at his ease. 'Contemptible poets are those who without any order, rule or rhythm make those songs and *romances* in which low folk,

[1] *Primavera* (Apéndices), No. 17. [2] *Ibid.* (Apéndices), No. 18.

and of menial station, take delight.' A cause must be prospering before it is denounced in this fashion, and it may therefore be assumed that many *romances* were current when Santillana delivered judgment. Writing in 1492 and quoting from the Lancelot ballad already mentioned, Nebrija speaks of it as 'aquel romance antiguo'; but 'old' has a very relative meaning, and Nebrija may have thought that a ballad composed fifty years earlier deserved to be called 'old.' At any rate, the oldest *romances* no doubt took their final form between the time of Santillana's youth and Nebrija's, and the introduction of printing into Spain has saved some of these for us. But—it must be said again and again—they are comparatively few in number, and no Spanish ballad is anything like as ancient as our own *Judas* ballad which exists in a thirteenth-century manuscript at Trinity College, Cambridge.

Santillana slightly overstates his case when he speaks of those who composed *romances* as 'contemptible poets' catering for the rabble. We have seen that Rodríguez de la Cámara and Carvajal both wrote *romances* in the fourth or fifth decade of the fifteenth century. Santillana cannot have meant to speak contemptuously of his two contemporaries, one a poet at the Castilian court of Juan II., and the other a poet at the Neapolitan court of Alfonso V. of Aragón; he evidently knew nothing of these artistic *romances*, and would have been pained to hear that educated men countenanced such stuff. No doubt other educated men besides Rodríguez de la Cámara and Carvajal wrote in the popular manner; possibly the Lancelot ballad quoted by Nebrija is the work of some court-poet: the conditions were changing, and—though Santillana was perhaps unaware of it—the *romances* were rising in esteem. But Santillana is right as regards the

earlier period. The primitive writers of popular *romances* were men of humble station, the impoverished representatives of those who had sung the *cantares de gesta*. These *cantares de gesta* were worked into the substance of histories and chronicles, and then went out of fashion. The *juglares* or singers came down in the world; in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries they had been welcome at courts and castles where they chanted long epics; by the fourteenth century they sang corrupt abridgments of these epics to less distinguished audiences; by the fifteenth century the epical songs were broken up. The themes were kept alive by oral tradition in the shape of shorter lyrical narratives, and these transformed fragments of the old epics were the primitive *romances* condemned by Santillana.

The subjects of these popular ballads were historical or legendary characters like Roderick, Bernardo del Carpio, the Counts of Castile, Fernán González, the Infantes of Lara, the Cid and his lieutenant, and other local heroes. Later on, the nameless poets of the people were tempted to deal with the sinister stories which crystallised round the name of Peter the Cruel, the long struggle against the Moors, episodes famous in the Arthurian legends and the books of chivalry, exploits recorded in the chronicles of foreign countries, miscellaneous incidents borrowed from diverse sources. It was gradually recognised that the popular instinct had discovered a most effective vehicle of poetic expression; more educated versifiers followed the lead of Rodríguez de la Cámara and Carvajal, but with a certain shamefaced air. The collections of *romances* published by Alonso de Fuentes and Lorenzo de Sepúlveda (in 1550 and 1551 respectively) are mainly the work of lettered courtiers who, like the 'Cæsarean Knight'—the *Caballero Cesáreo*

who contributed to the second edition of Sepúlveda's book —are conscious of their condescension, and withhold their names, under the quaint delusion that they are 'reserved for greater things.'

But this bashfulness soon wore off. Before the end of the sixteenth century famous writers like Lope de Vega and Góngora proved themselves to be masters of the ballad-form, and within a comparatively short while there came into existence the mass of *romances* which fill the two volumes of the *Romancero general* published in 1600 and 1605. The best of these are brilliant performances; but they are late, artistic imitations. For genuine old popular *romances* we must look in broadsides, or in the collections issued at Antwerp and Saragossa in the middle of the sixteenth century by Martín Nucio and Esteban de Nájera respectively. We may also read them (with a good deal more) in the *Primavera y Flor de romances* edited by Wolf and Hofmann; and, most conveniently of all, in the amplified reprint of the *Primavera* for which we are indebted to Sr. Menéndez y Pelayo, the most eminent of living Spanish scholars. But the *romances*—not all of them very ancient—in the amplified *Primavera* fill three volumes; and, as it would be impossible to examine them one by one, it has occurred to me that the only practical plan is to take Lockhart as a basis, and to comment briefly on the ballads represented in his volume of translations—which I see some of you consulting. There may be occasion, also, to point out some omissions.

Lockhart begins with a translation of a *romance* quoted in *Don Quixote* by Ginés de Pasamonte, after the destruction of his puppet-show by the scandalised knight:—

Las huestes de don Rodrigo desmayaban y huian.[1]

[1] *Primavera*, No. 5; Durán, No. 599.

The English rendering, though not very exact throughout, is adequate and spirited enough :—

> The hosts of Don Rodrigo were scattered in dismay,
> When lost was the eighth battle, nor heart nor hope had they ;
> He, when he saw that field was lost, and all his hope was flown,
> He turned him from his flying host, and took his way alone.

In a prefatory note to his version, Lockhart says that this ballad 'appears to be one of the oldest among the great number relating to the Moorish conquest of Spain.' This is somewhat vague, but the remark might easily lead an ingenuous reader to think that the ballad was very ancient. This is not so. There is a thirteenth-century French epic, entitled *Anséis de Carthage*,[1] which represents Charlemagne as establishing in Spain a vassal king named Anséis. Anséis dishonours Letise, daughter of Ysorés de Conimbre, and Ysorés takes vengeance by introducing the Arabs into Spain. Clearly this is another version of the legend concerning the dishonour of 'La Cava,' daughter of Count Julian (otherwise Illán or Urbán) by Roderick. Anséis is manifestly Roderick, Letise is 'La Cava,' Ysorés is Julian, and Carthage may be meant for Cartagena. The transmission of this story to France, and a passage in the chronicle of the Moor Rasis —which survives only in a Spanish translation made from a Portuguese version during the fourteenth century by a certain Maestro Muhammad (who dictated apparently to a churchman called Gil Pérez)—would point to the existence of ancient Spanish epics on Roderick's overthrow. But no vestige of these epics survives.

The oldest extant *romances* relating to Roderick are derived from the *Crónica Sarrazyna* of Pedro del Corral, 'a lewd and presumptuous fellow,' who trumped up a parcel

[1] *Anseis von Karthago. Herausgegeben von Johann Alton*, 194ste Publication des Litterarischen Vereins in Stuttgart. (Tübingen, 1892.)

of lies, according to Pérez de Guzmán. Corral's book is not all lies: he compiled it from the *Crónica general,* the chronicle of the Moor Rasis, and the *Crónica Troyana,* and padded it out with inventions of his own. But the point that interests us is that Corral made his compilation about the year 1443, and it follows that the *romances* derived from it must be of later date. They are much later: the oldest were not written till the sixteenth century, and therefore they are not really ancient nor popular. But some of them have a few memorable lines. For instance, in the first ballad translated by Lockhart:—

> Last night I was the King of Spain—to-day no king am I;
> Last night fair castles held my train,—to-night where shall I lie?
> Last night a hundred pages did serve me on the knee,—
> To-night not one I call mine own:—not one pertains to me.

There is charm, also, in the *romance* which begins with the line:—

> Los vientos eran contrarios, la luna estaba crecida.[1]

And as Lockhart omits this, I may quote the opening in Gibson's excellent version[2]:—

> The winds were sadly moaning, the moon was on the change,
> The fishes they were gasping, the skies were wild and strange,
> 'Twas then that Don Rodrigo beside La Cava slept,
> Within a tent of splendour, with golden hangings deckt.
>
> Three hundred cords of silver did hold it firm and free,
> Within a hundred maidens stood passing fair to see;
> The fifty they were playing with finest harmonie,
> The fifty they were singing with sweetest melodie.
>
> A maid they called Fortuna uprose and thus she spake:
> 'If thou sleepest, Don Rodrigo, I pray thee now awake;

[1] *Primavera,* No. 5*a*; Durán, No. 602.

[2] James Young Gibson, *The Cid Ballads, and other Poems and Translations from Spanish and German* (London, 1887).

Thine evil fate is on thee, thy kingdom it doth fall,
Thy people perish, and thy hosts are scattered one and all,
Thy famous towns and cities fall in a single day,
And o'er thy forts and castles another lord bears sway.'

The *romances* of this series have perhaps met with rather more success than they deserved on their intrinsic merits. The second ballad translated by Lockhart—

Despues que el rey don Rodrigo á España perdido habia[1]—

is quoted by Doña Rodríguez in *Don Quixote*; and the simple chance that these *romances* were lodged in Cervantes's memory has made them familiar to everybody. Nor is this the end of their good fortune, for the first ballad translated by Lockhart caught the attention of Victor Hugo, who incorporated a fragment of it in *La Bataille perdue*.[2] Among the twenty-five *romances* on Roderick in Durán's collection, those by Timoneda, Lorenzo de Sepúlveda, and Gabriel Lobo Lasso de la Vega can, of course, be no older than the middle or the latter half of the sixteenth century. Others, though anonymous, can be shown to belong, at the earliest, to the extreme end of the sixteenth century.

In a note to the eighth poem in his anthology—*The Escape of Count Fernan Gonzalez*—Lockhart mentions 'La Cava,' and remarks that 'no child in Spain was ever christened by that ominous name after the downfall of the Gothic Kingdom.' Sweeping statements of this kind are generally dangerous, but in this particular case one might safely go further, and say that no child in Spain, or anywhere else, was ever christened 'La Cava' at any time. 'Cava' appears to be an

[1] *Primavera*, No. 7; Durán, No. 606.

[2] *Orientales*, XVI. Victor Hugo may probably have heard of this *romance*, and of the Lara *romance* mentioned on pp. 91-92, through his elder brother Abel, who gave prose translations of both ballads in his *Romances historiques* (Paris, 1822), pp. 11-12, 135-137.

abbreviation or variant of the name 'Alataba,' and it is first given as the name of Count Julian's daughter by the Moor Rasis, an Arab historian who lived two centuries after the downfall of the Gothic kingdom, and whose chronicle, as I have already said, survives only in a fourteenth-century Spanish translation made through the Portuguese. We cannot feel sure that the name 'Cava' occurred in the original Arabic; and, even if it did, no testimony given two hundred years after an event can be decisive. But why does Lockhart think that 'Cava' was an ominous name? Perhaps because he took it to be the Arabic word for a wanton. This is, in fact, the explanation given in the *Historia verdadera del rey don Rodrigo y de la pérdida de España*, which purports to be a translation from the Arabic of Abulcacim Tarif Abentarique. It is nothing of the kind. Abentarique is a mythical personage, and his supposititious chronicle was fabricated at Granada by a *morisco* called Miguel de Luna who, by the way, was the first to assert that 'La Cava's' real name was Florinda. These circumstances enable us to assign a modern date to certain *romances* which are popularly supposed to be ancient. If a *romance* speaks of Roderick's alleged victim as 'La Cava' in a derogatory sense, we know at once that it was written after the publication of Luna's forgery in 1589: and accordingly we must reject as a late invention the notorious ballad beginning—

De una torre de palacio se salió por un postigo.[1]

In Lockhart's second group of *romances* the central figure is Bernardo del Carpio who, says the translator, 'belongs

[1] Durán, No. 586. Durán points out the absurd impropriety of the line:—

Sabrás, mi florida Cava, que de ayer acá no vivo.

The ending of this *romance* is far better known than the beginning:—

Si dicen quien de los dos la mayor culpa ha tenido,
digan los hombres 'La Cava,' y las mujeres 'Rodrigo.'

exclusively to Spanish History, or rather perhaps to Spanish Romance.' The word 'perhaps' may be omitted. Bernardo del Carpio was a fabulous paladin invented by the popular poets of Castile, who, either through the *Chanson de Roland,* or some similar poem, had heard of Charlemagne's victories in the Peninsula. It is not absolutely certain that Charlemagne ever invaded Spain; still, his expedition is recorded by Arab historians as well as by Castilian chroniclers, and no doubt it was commonly believed to be an historical fact. But, as time went on, the idea that Charlemagne had carried all before him offended the patriotic sentiment of the Castilian folk-poets, and this led them to give the story a very different turn. What happened precisely is not clear, but the explanation suggested by Milá y Fontanals and Sr. Menéndez y Pelayo is ingenious and probable. Attracted perhaps by the French name of Bernardo, the *juglares* seem to have seized upon the far-off figure of a certain Bernardo (son of Ramón, Count of Ribagorza), who had headed successful raids against the Arabs. They removed the scene of his exploits from Aragón to Castile, transformed him into the son of the Count de Saldaña and Thiber, Charlemagne's sister—or, alternatively, the son of the Count Don Sancho and Jimena, sister of Alfonso the Chaste—called him Bernardo del Carpio, and hailed him as the champion of Castile. The childless Alfonso is represented as inviting Charlemagne to succeed him when he dies; the mythical Bernardo protests in the name of Alfonso's subjects, and the offer is withdrawn; thereupon Charlemagne invades Spain, and is defeated at Roncesvalles—not, as in the *Chanson de Roland,* by the Arabs, but—by Spaniards from the different provinces united under the leadership of Bernardo del Carpio. The *Crónica general* speaks of Bernardo's slaying with his own hand 'un alto ome de Francia

que avie nombre Buesso,' and this was developed later into a personal combat between Roland and Bernardo del Carpio who, of course, is the victor. These imaginary exploits were celebrated in *cantares de gesta* of which fragments are believed to be embedded in the *Crónica general*, and these are represented by three *romances*. None of the forty-six ballads in the Bernardo del Carpio series can be regarded as ancient with the possible exception of—

Con cartas y mensajeros el rey al Carpio envió[1]—

quoted in the Second Part of *Don Quixote*. This *romance*, as Sr. Menéndez y Pelayo thinks, is derived from a *cantar de gesta* written after the compilation of the *Crónica general*. Of the Bernardo *romances* printed in Durán's collection four are by Lorenzo de Sepúlveda, four by Gabriel Lobo Lasso de la Vega, and three by Lucas Rodríguez. Lockhart's four examples are all modern, and his renderings are not specially successful; but in the original the first of the four—

Con tres mil y mas leoneses deja la ciudad Bernardo[2]—

is a capital imitation of a popular ballad. It makes its earliest appearance in the 1604 edition of the *Romancero general*, and that is enough to prove its modernity.

Another modern ballad, which is also first found in the *Romancero general*, is translated by Lockhart under the title of *The Maiden Tribute*. Neither the translation nor the original—

En consulta estaba un dia con sus grandes y consejo[3]—

[1] *Primavera*, No. 13*a*; Durán, No. 654.

[2] Durán, No. 646. *The Complaint of the Count of Saldaña*, as Lockhart entitles it, is from Durán, No. 625:—

Bañando está las prisiones con lágrimas que derrama.

The Funeral of the Count of Saldaña is from Durán, No. 657:—

Hincado está de rodillas ese valiente Bernardo.

Bernardo and Alphonso is from Durán, No. 655:—

Con solos diez de los suyos ante el Rey, Bernardo llega.

[3] Durán, No. 617.

calls for comment. A similar legend is associated with the name of Fernán González, the hero of the eighth poem in Lockhart's book. Fernán González, Count of Castile, was an historical personage more remarkable as a political strategist than as a leader in the field. However, he makes a gallant figure in the *Poema de Fernán González*, a thirteenth-century poem written in the *quaderna vía*, which appears to have been imitated a hundred years later by the French author of *Hernaut de Beaulande*. But no extant *romance* on Fernán González is based on the *Poema*. The ballad translated by Lockhart—

Preso está Fernán González el gran conde de Castilla[1]—

comes from the *Estoria del noble caballero Fernán González*, a popular arrangement of the *Crónica general* as recast in 1344. The *romance* is a good enough piece of work, but it is more modern than the ballad beginning

Buen conde Fernán González el rey envia por vos;[2]

and this last *romance* is less interesting than another ballad of the same period:—

Castellanos y leoneses tienen grandes divisiones.[3]

Both of these are thought to represent a lost epic which was worked into the *Crónica general* of 1344.

Lockhart prints translations of two *romances* relating to the Infantes of Lara, one of them being modern,[4] and the other the famous

A cazar va don Rodrigo y aun don Rodrigo de Lara.[5]

This was quoted by Sancho Panza, and—as M. Foulché-

[1] *Primavera*, No. 15; Durán, No. 700.
[2] *Primavera*, No. 17; Durán, No. 704.
[3] *Primavera*, No. 16; Durán, No. 703.
[4] Durán, No. 686.
No se puede llamar rey quien usa tal villanía.
[5] *Primavera*, No. 26; Durán, No. 691.

Delbosc was the first to point out—it has had the distinction of being splendidly adapted by Victor Hugo in the *Orientales* (xxx.) under the fantastic title of *Romance Mauresque* :—

Don Rodrigue est à la chasse
Sans épée et sans cuirasse,
Un jour d'été, vers midi,
Sous la feuillée et sur l'herbe
Il s'assied, l'homme superbe,
Don Rodrigue le hardi.

In this instance we have to do with a genuine old *romance* derived—more or less indirectly—from a lost epic on the Infantes of Lara written between 1268 and 1344, or perhaps from a lost recast of this lost epic. And Lockhart might have chosen other ballads of even more energetic inspiration which spring from the same source. Among these are—

A Calatrava la Vieja la combaten castellanos[1]—

in which Rodrigo de Lara vows vengeance for the insult offered to his wife by Gonzalo González, the youngest of the Infantes of Lara; and that genuine masterpiece of barbaric but poignant pathos in which Gonzalo Gustios kisses the severed heads of his seven murdered sons :—

Pártese el moro Alicante víspera de sant Cebrián.[2]

And to these Sr. Menéndez y Pelayo would add a third ballad beginning with the line :—

Ya se salen de Castilla castellanos con gran saña.[3]

But, if a foreigner may be allowed an opinion, this falls far short of the others in force and fire.

The next ballad given by Lockhart, entitled *The Wedding of the Lady Theresa,* is a translation of

En los reinos de León el Quinto Alfonso reinaba[4]—

[1] *Primavera,* No. 19; Durán, No. 665.
[2] *Primavera,* No. 24.
[3] *Primavera,* No. 25.
[4] Durán, No. 721.

first printed by Lorenzo de Sepúlveda, who may perhaps have written it. Whatever doubt there may be as to the authorship, there is none as to the date of this composition: it is no earlier than the sixteenth century. There would seem to be some basis of fact for the story that some Christian princess married some prominent Arab chief; but there is a confusion between Almanzor and the Toledan governor Abdallah on the one hand, and a confusion between Alfonso v. of León and his father Bermudo II. on the other hand, not to speak of chronological difficulties and the like. But we need not try to unravel the tangle, for there is no authentic old *romance* on the Infanta Teresa, though a poem on the subject—

Casamiento se hacia que á Dios ha desagradado[1]—

has crept into the collection edited by Wolf and Hofmann. This is not unimpressive as a piece of poetic narrative; yet as it is written—not in assonances, but—in perfect rhyme, it is not a *romance* at all, according to the definition with which we began.

In his choice of *romances* on the Cid Lockhart has not been altogether happy. He begins well with a translation of the admirable

Cabalga Diego Laínez al buen rey besar la mano.[2]

This is probably no older than the sixteenth century, yet, apart from its poetic beauty, it has a special interest as deriving from a lost *Cantar de Rodrigo* which differed from the extant *Crónica rimada*. But the remaining poems in Lockhart's group are mostly poor and recent imitations. *Ximena demands vengeance* is translated from

Grande rumor se levanta de gritos, armas, y voces.[3]

[1] *Primavera*, No. 27.
[2] *Primavera*, No. 29; Durán, No. 731. [3] Durán, No. 732.

But this *romance* appears for the first time in Escobar's collection published as late as 1612. Then, again, *The Cid and the Five Moorish Kings* is translated from

Reyes moros en Castilla entran con gran alarido.[1]

And this is first given by Lorenzo de Sepúlveda who also prints the original of the next ballad, *The Cid's Courtship*—

De Rodrigo de Vivar muy grande fama corria.[2]

Upon this follows a translation of a ballad which, says Lockhart, 'contains some curious traits of rough and antique manners,' and 'is not included in Escobar's collection.' The ballad, which Lockhart entitles *The Cid's Wedding*, is translated from

A su palacio de Burgos, como buen padrino honrado.[3]

But there is nothing antique about it; it was written in Escobar's own time, and appeared first in the *Romancero general*. Nor is there anything antique in the original of *The Cid and the Leper*—

Ya se parte don Rodrigo, que de Vivar se apellida.[4]

This is first printed by Lorenzo de Sepúlveda, who is also the first to give

Ya se parte de Toledo ese buen Cid afamado,[5]

which Lockhart, whose version begins at the eleventh line, calls *Bavieca*. These are, of course, no older than the sixteenth century, and this is also the date of

A concilio dentro en Roma, á concilio bien llamado,[6]

[1] Durán, No. 737.
[2] Durán, No. 738.
[3] Durán, No. 740.
[4] Durán, No. 742.
[5] Durán, No. 886. Lockhart begins at the line—
El rey aguardara al Cid como á bueno y leal vasallo.
[6] *Primavera*, No. 34; Durán, No. 756.

entitled *The Excommunication of the Cid* in the English version. There is a note of disrespect in the original which need cause no surprise, for our Spanish friends, though incorruptibly orthodox, keep their religion and their politics more apart than one might think, and at this very period Charles v. had shown unmistakably that he knew how to put a Pope in his place as regards temporal matters. But it need scarcely be said that the Spanish contains nothing equivalent to Lockhart's—

The Pope he sitteth above them all, *that they may kiss his toe*—

a Protestant interpolation so grotesque as to be wholly out of keeping in any Spanish poem.

You will see, then, that most of the Cid ballads translated by Lockhart are unrepresentative. He might have given us a version of

Dia era de los reyes, dia era señalado [1]—

one of three *romances* [2] which are taken from the same source as the first in his group—

Cabalga Diego Laínez al buen rey besar la mano.

But the deficiency has been made good by Gibson who notes as a proof of the ballad's modernity—it is no older than the sixteenth century—the inclusion of a passage from the Lara legend—

It was the feast-day of the Kings,
A high and holy day,
When all the dames and damosels
The King for hansel pray.

[1] *Primavera*, No. 30*b*; Durán, No. 733.

[2] The other two are (*a*) *Primavera*, No. 30:—

Cada dia que amanece veo quien mató á mi padre.

(*b*) *Primavera*, No. 61*a*, and Duran, No. 922:—

En Burgos está el buen rey don Alonso el Deseado.

All save Ximena Gomez,
The Count Lozano's child,
And she has knelt low at his feet,
And cries with dolour wild:

'My mother died of sorrow, King,
In sorrow still live I;
I see the man who slew my Sire
Each day that passes by.

A horseman on a hunting horse,
With hawk in hand rides he;
And in my dove-cot feeds his bird,
To show his spite at me. . . .

I sent to tell him of my grief,
He sent to threaten me,
That he would cut my skirts away,
Most shameful for to see!

That he would put my maids to scorn,
The wedded and to wed,
And underneath my silken gown
My little page strike dead! . . .'

Of the two hundred and five *romances* on the Cid printed by Madame Michaëlis de Vasconcellos, probably one hundred and eighty at least may be considered modern, and some we know to have been written by Lorenzo de Sepúlveda, Lucas Rodríguez, and Juan de la Cueva. But the rest are doubtless ancient (as *romances* go), and it is unfortunate that Lockhart gives no specimen of the ballads on the siege of Zamora. For example, the celebrated ballad that begins

Riberas del Duero arriba cabalgan dos Zamoranos[1]—

a splendid *romance* the opening of which may be quoted from Gibson's rendering:—

Along the Douro's bank there ride
Two gallant Zamorese

[1] *Primavera*, No. 42*a*; Durán, No. 775.

On sorrel steeds; their banners green
Are fluttering in the breeze.

Their armour is of finest steel,
And rich their burnished brands;
They bear their shields before their breasts,
Stout lances in their hands.

They ride their steeds with pointed spurs,
And bits of silver fine;
More gallant men were never seen,
So bright their arms do shine.

Then follow their challenge to any two knights in Sancho's camp (except the King himself and the Cid), its acceptance by the two Counts, the Cid's mocking intervention, and the encounter:—

The Counts arrive; one clad in black,
And one in crimson bright;
The opposing ranks each other meet,
And furious is the fight.

The youth has quick unhorsed his man,
With sturdy stroke and true;
The Sire has pierced the other's mail,
And sent his lance right through.

The horseless knight, pale at the sight,
Ran hurrying from the fray;
Back to Zamora ride the twain,
With glory crowned that day!

And another *romance* worth giving from the Zamora series is the impressive

Por aquel postigo viejo que nunca fuera cerrado.[1]

Fortunately, Lockhart's omission has been made good by

[1] *Primavera*, No. 50; Durán, No. 1897.

Gibson, though of course no translation can do more than give a hint of the original :—

On through the ancient gateway,
That had nor lock nor bar,
I saw a crimson banner come,
With three hundred horse of war ;

I saw them bear a coffin,
And black was its array ;
And placed within the coffin
A noble body lay. . . .

These ballads are included in the *Romancero del Cid,* and they are particularly interesting as being the *débris* of a lost epic on the siege of Zamora which has apparently been utilised in the *Crónica general*; but perhaps a translator might excuse himself for not dealing with them on the ground that the Cid only appears incidentally. Indeed in

Por aquel postigo viejo que nunca fuera cerrado,

the Cid does not appear at all. The same excuse might be given for omitting the well-known

Doliente estaba, doliente, ese buen rey don Fernando,[1]

of which Gibson, however, gives a fairly adequate rendering, so far as the difference of language allows :—

The King was dying, slowly dying,
The good King Ferdinand ;
His feet were pointed to the East,
A taper in his hand.

Beside his bed, and at the head,
His four sons took their place,
The three were children of the Queen,
The fourth of bastard race.

---

[1] *Primavera*, No. 35; Durán, No. 762.

The bastard had the better luck,
Had rank and noble gains;
Archbishop of Toledo he,
And Primate of the Spains. . . .

So, again, the Cid does not appear in the often-quoted *romance* beginning—

Rey don Sancho, rey don Sancho, no digas que no te aviso.[1]

Nor does he figure in the still more celebrated ballad which records Diego Ordóñez' challenge to the garrison of Zamora after Sancho's assassination:—

Ya cabalga Diego Ordóñez, del real se habia salido.[2]

But we may thank Gibson for enabling English readers to form some idea of both. His version of the Ordóñez ballad is by no means unhappy:—

Don Diego Ordoñez rides away
From the royal camp with speed,
Armed head to foot with double mail,
And on a coal-black steed.

He rides to challenge Zamora's men,
His breast with fury filled;
To avenge the King Don Sancho
Whom the traitor Dolfos killed.

He reached in haste Zamora's gate,
And loud his trumpet blew;
And from his mouth like sparks of fire
His words in fury flew:

'Zamorans, I do challenge ye,
Ye traitors born and bred;
I challenge ye all, both great and small,
The living and the dead.

---

[1] *Primavera*, No. 45; Durán, No. 777.
[2] *Primavera*, No. 47; Durán, No. 791.

I challenge the men and women,
The unborn and the born;
I challenge the wine and waters,
The cattle and the corn.

Within your town that traitor lives
Our King who basely slew;—
Who harbour traitors in their midst
Themselves are traitors too.

I'm here in arms against ye all
The combat to maintain;
Or else with five and one by one,
As is the use in Spain!' . . .

To Gibson's fine instinct we are also indebted for an English rendering of

En las almenas de Toro, allí estaba una doncella[1]—

a ballad of doubtful date which is superbly 'glossed' in *Las Almenas de Toro* by Lope de Vega, who uses the old *romances* with astonishing felicity. But the most ancient poem in the whole series of the Cid ballads is a composition, said to be unconnected with any antecedent epic, and possibly dating (in its primitive form) from the fourteenth century:—

Hélo, hélo por dó viene el moro por la calzada.[2]

This *romance* has been done into English by Gibson with considerable success, as you may judge by the opening stanzas:—

He comes, he comes, the Moorman comes
Along the sounding way;
With stirrup short, and pointed spur,
He rides his gallant bay. . . .

---

[1] *Primavera*, No. 54; Durán, No. 816.
[2] *Primavera*, No. 55; Durán, No. 858.

He looks upon Valencia's towers,
And mutters in his ire:
'Valencia, O Valencia,
Burn thou with evil fire!

Although the Christian holds thee now,
Thou wert the Moor's before;
And if my lance deceive me not,
Thou 'lt be the Moor's once more!' . . .

There is still much to be said concerning the Cid *romances* which Southey dismissed too cavalierly; but my time is running out, and I must pass on to the next ballads translated by Lockhart. *Garci Perez de Vargas* is a rendering of

Estando sobre Sevilla el rey Fernando el tercero;[1]

and *The Pounder,* which was referred to by Don Quixote when he proposed to tear up an oak by the roots and use it as a weapon, is a version of

Jerez, aquesa nombrada, cercada era de cristianos.[2]

Neither need detain us; both are modern, and the latter is by Lorenzo de Sepúlveda. Much more curious are the group of ballads on Peter the Cruel. In the Spanish drama Peter is represented as the *Rey Justiciero,* the autocrat of democratic sympathies, dealing out summary justice to the nobles and the wealthy, who grind the poor man's face. But this is merely what the sophisticated middle class supposed to be the democratic point of view. The democracy, as we see from the anonymous popular poets, believed Peter to be much worse than he actually was, and the *romances* record the deliberate calumnies invented by the partisans of Peter's triumphant bastard

[1] Durán, No. 935. [2] Durán, No. 933.

brother, Henry of Trastamara. This is noticeable in the translation of

Yo me estabá allá en Coimbra que yo me la hube ganado,[1]

which Lockhart calls *The Murder of the Master.* It is true that Peter had his brother, Don Fadrique, Master of the Order of Santiago, put to death at Seville in 1358; it is also true that Fadrique was a tricky and dangerous conspirator, who had already been detected and pardoned by his brother more than once. The *romance* passes over Fadrique's plots in silence, and this is common enough with political hacks; but it goes on to imply that the crime was suggested to Peter by his mistress. This is almost certainly false, and not a vestige of evidence can be produced in favour of it; but no one is asked to swear to the truth of a song, and the dramatic power of the *romance*—which is supposed to be recited by the murdered man—is undeniable.

A similar perversion of historical truth is found in *The Death of Queen Blanche,* which Lockhart translates from

Doña María de Padilla, no os mostredes triste, no.[2]

Lockhart, indeed, says: 'that Pedro was accessory to the violent death of this young and innocent princess whom he had married, and immediately after deserted for ever, there can be no doubt.' But the matter is by no means so free from doubt as Lockhart would have us believe. It is true that Peter's conduct to Blanche de Bourbon was inhuman, but the circumstances—and even the place—of her death are uncertain. Assuming that she was murdered, however, it is certain that María de Padilla had no share in this crime. María appears to have been a gentle and compassionate

[1] *Primavera,* No. 65; Durán, No. 966.
[2] *Primavera,* No. 68; Durán, No. 972.

creature, whose only fault was that she loved Peter too well. But justice is not greatly cultivated by political partisans, and the vindictiveness of the *romances* is poetically effective. Lockhart closes the series with a version (apparently by Walter Scott) of

Los fieros cuerpos revueltos entre los robustos brazos,[1]

and with a disappointing translation of a very striking ballad, in which an undercurrent of sympathy for Peter is observable:—

A los pies de don Enrique yace muerto el rey don Pedro.[2]

Refrains of any kind are exceptional in the *romances*, but in this instance a double refrain is artistically used:—

Y los de Enrique
Cantan, repican y gritan:
¡ Viva Enrique !
Y los de Pedro
Clamorean, doblan, lloran
Su rey muerto.

This is indeed a most brilliant performance, worthy, as Sr. Menéndez y Pelayo says, of Góngora himself at his best; but the very brilliance of the versification is enough to prove that the ballad cannot have been written by a poet of the people. Still, though it is neither ancient nor popular, we may be grateful to Lockhart for including it in his volume.

He was less happy in deciding to give us *The Lord of Buitrago*, a version of a ballad beginning

Si el caballo vos han muerto, subid, rey, en mi caballo.[3]

This is not of any great merit, nor is it in any sense popular

[1] Durán, No. 978. [2] Durán, No. 979. [3] Durán, No. 981.

or ancient: it appears to be the production of Alfonso Hurtado de Velarde, a Guadalajara dramatist who lived towards the end of the sixteenth century, and much of its vogue is due to the fact that it struck the fancy of Vélez de Guevara who used the first six words as the title of one of his plays. Lockhart was better advised in choosing *The King of Aragon,* a translation of

Miraba de Campo-Viejo el rey de Aragón un dia.[1]

This is thought by Sr. Menéndez y Pelayo to be, possibly, the production of some soldier serving at Naples under Alfonso v. of Aragón, and in any case it is of popular inspiration. Lorenzo de Sepúlveda's text contains an allusion to a page—*un pajecico*—whom Alfonso is said to have loved better than himself, and the translator was naturally puzzled by it. It is precisely by attention to some such detail that we are often enabled to fix the date of composition; and so it happens in the present instance. A fuller and better text is given by Esteban de Nájera, who reads *un tal hermano* for the incomprehensible *un pajecico.* This reading makes the matter clear. The reference is to the death of Alphonso v.'s brother Pedro; this occurred in 1438, and the *romance* was probably written not long afterwards.

At this point Lockhart enters upon the series of border-ballads called *romances fronterizos,* and he begins with a translation of

Reduan, bien se te acuerda que me distes la palabra,[2]

quoted by Ginés Pérez de Hita in the first part of his *Guerras civiles de Granada,* published in 1595 under the title of *Historia de los bandos de los Zegríes y Abencerrajes.*

[1] *Primavera,* No. 101*a*; Durán, No. 1227.
[2] *Primavera,* No. 72; Durán, No. 1046.

Pérez de Hita speaks of it as ancient, and Lockhart is, of course, not to blame for translating the ballad precisely as he found it in the text before him. Any translator would be bound to do the same to-day if he attempted a new rendering of the poem; but he would doubtless think it advisable to state in a note the result of the critical analysis which had scarcely been begun when Lockhart wrote. It now seems fairly certain that Pérez de Hita ran two *romances* into one, and that the verses from the fourth stanza onwards in Lockhart—

They passed the Elvira gate, with banners all displayed—

are part of a ballad on Boabdil's expedition against Lucena in 1483. This martial narrative, describing the gorgeous squadrons of El Rey Chico as they file past the towers of the Alhambra packed with applauding Moorish ladies, reduces to insignificance *The Flight from Granada*, though the translation is an improvement on Lorenzo de Sepúlveda's creaking original:—

En la ciudad de Granada grandes alaridos dan.[1]

The next in order is *The Death of Don Alonso de Aguilar*, a rendering of

Estando el rey don Fernando en conquista de Granada.[2]

This ballad commemorates the death of Alonso de Aguilar, elder brother of 'the great Captain' Gonzalo de Córdoba, which took place in action at Sierra Bermeja on May 18, 1501. This date is important. A serious chronological mistake occurs in the opening line of the ballad, which places Aguilar's death before the surrender of Granada in 1492; and this points to the conclusion that the *romance*

[1] Durán, No. 1082. [2] *Primavera*, No. 95; Durán, No. 1088.

was not written till long after the event, when the exact details had been forgotten. It is of popular inspiration, no doubt, but it is clearly not ancient. Still, in default of any other *romances fronterizos*, we receive it gratefully. This section of Lockhart's book is certainly the least adequate.[1] The border-ballads which he gives are most of them excellent, but unfortunately he gives us far too few of them. Some of his omissions may be explained. He tells us in almost so many words that he leaves out a later ballad on Aguilar's death :—

¡ Río Verde, río Verde, tinto vas en sangre viva ![2]—

because there was already in existence an 'exquisite version' by the Bishop of Dromore[3]—whom some of you may not instantly identify with Thomas Percy, the editor of the *Reliques*. Most probably Lockhart omitted a ballad with

[1] *The Departure of King Sebastian*, referring to the expedition of 1578, is obviously modern ; the original is to be found in Durán, No. 1245 :—

Una bella lusitana, dama ilustre y de valía.

[2] *Primavera*, No. 96*a* ; Durán, 1086.

[3] *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (London, 1765), vol. i., pp. 319-323. Percy's version begins as follows :—

Gentle river, gentle river,
Lo, thy streams are stained with gore,
Many a brave and noble captain
Floats along thy willow'd shore.

All beside thy limpid waters,
All beside thy sands so bright,
Moorish chiefs and Christian warriors
Join'd in fierce and mortal fight.

Lords, and dukes, and noble princes
On thy fatal banks were slain ;
Fatal banks that gave to slaughter
All the pride and flower of Spain.

Percy also gives an adaptation of Durán, No. 53 :—

Por la calle de su dama paseando se halla Zaide.

In a preliminary note he says :—'The Spanish editor pretends (how truly I know not) that they are translations from the Arabic or Morisco language.

an effective refrain (perhaps borrowed from some Arabic song)—

Paseábase el rey moro por la ciudad de Granada—

because it had been translated, though with no very striking success, by Byron a little while before.[1] Nor can Lockhart be blamed for omitting the oldest of the *romances fronterizos*:—

Cercada tiene á Baeza ese arráez Audalla Mir.[2]

Hidden in Argote de Molina's *Nobleza de Andalucía*,[3] this ballad was generally overlooked till 1899 when Sr. Menéndez y Pelayo did us the good service of reprinting it. It still awaits an English translator who, when he takes it

Indeed the plain, unadorned nature of the verse, and the native simplicity of language and sentiment, which runs through these poems, prove that they are ancient; or, at least, that they were written before the Castillians began to form themselves on the model of the Tuscan poets, and had imported from Italy that fondness for conceit and refinement which has for these two centuries past so miserably infected the Spanish poetry, and rendered it so unnatural, affected, and obscure.'

[1] *Primavera*, No. 85*a*; Durán, No. 1064. Byron's adaptation is entitled *A Very Mournful Ballad on the Siege and Conquest of Alhama, which, in the Arabic language is to the following purport*:—

The Moorish king rides up and down,
Through Granada's royal town;
From Elvira's gates to those
Of Bivarambla on he goes.
Woe is me, Alhama!

Letters to the monarch tell,
How Alhama's city fell:
In the fire the scroll he threw,
And the messenger he slew.
Woe is me, Alhama! etc.

Ginés Pérez de Hita states that this ballad was originally written in Arabic, and that the inhabitants of Granada were forbidden to sing it. Possibly the *romance* was suggested by some Arabic song on the loss of Alhama.

[2] *Primavera* (Apéndices), No. 18.

[3] Published at Seville in 1588, and reprinted at Jaén in 1867.

in hand, may perhaps have something destructive to say respecting its alleged date (1368). Such a translator might also give us an English version of

Moricos, los mis moricos, los que ganáis mi soldada,[1]

which is thought to be the next oldest of these *romances fronterizos*. Or he might attempt to render

Álora la bien cercada, tu que estás á par del río,[2]

which commemorates the death of Diego de Ribera during the siege of Álora in 1434. A passage in the *Laberinto de Fortuna* implies that Ribera's death was the theme of many popular songs in the time of Juan de Mena,[3] and possibly the extant *romance* may be taken to represent them. There is another fine ballad on the historic victory of the Infante Fernando (the first regent during Juan II.'s minority) at Antequera in 1410:—

De Antequera partió el moro tres horas antes del dia.[4]

This also calls for translation, for all that we possess is Gibson's version of Timoneda's recast, a copy of verses disfigured by superfine interpolations:—

His words were mingled with the tears
That down his cheeks did roll:
'Alas! Narcissa of my life,
Narcissa of my soul.'

---

[1] *Primavera*, No. 71; Durán, No. 1039.

[2] *Primavera*, No. 79; Durán, No. 1073.

[3] See M. R. Foulché-Delbosc's edition (Macon, 1904), p. 189.

Aquel que tu vees con la saetada,
que nunca mas faze mudança del gesto,
mas, por virtud de morir tan onesto,
dexa su sangre tan bien derramada
sobre la villa no poco cantada,
el adelantado Diego de Ribera
es el que fizo la vuestra frontera
tender las sus faldas mas contra Granada.

[4] *Primavera*, No. 74; Durán, No. 1043.

Nymphs called Narcissa are never met with in popular primitive poetry; but Gibson (from whose version of Timoneda I have just quoted) has happily translated some genuine specimens of the *romances fronterizos*. Thus he has given us a version of the justly celebrated

¡ Abenámar, Abenámar, moro de la morería!—[1]

in which Juan II. questions the Moor, and declares himself, according to an Arabic poetical convention, the suitor of Granada:—

'Abenámar, Abenámar,
Moor of Moors, and man of worth,
On the day when thou wert cradled,
There were signs in heaven and earth. . . .

Abenámar, Abenámar,
With thy words my heart is won!
Tell me what these castles are,
Shining grandly in the sun!'

'That, my lord, is the Alhambra,
This the Moorish mosque apart,
And the rest the Alixares
Wrought and carved with wondrous art.' . . .

Up and spake the good King John,
To the Moor he thus replied:
'Art thou willing, O Granada,
I will woo thee for my bride,
Cordova shall be thy dowry,
And Sevilla by its side.'

'I'm no widow, good King John,
I am still a wedded wife;
And the Moor, who is my husband,
Loves me better than his life!'

Gibson has missed an opportunity in not translating one

[1] *Primavera*, No. 78*a*; Durán, No. 1038.

of the popular ballads on the precocious Master of the Order of Calatrava, Rodrigo Girón, who was killed at the siege of Loja in 1482:—

¡ Ay, Dios qué buen caballero el Maestre de Calatrava ![1]

But he makes amends with a version of a sixteenth-century *romance*[2] which he entitles *The Lady and the Lions*: the story has been versified by Schiller, and has been still more admirably retold by Browning in *The Glove*. And we have also from Gibson a version of a rather puzzling *romance* given by Pérez de Hita:—

Cercada está Santa Fe, con mucho lienzo encerado.[3]

The fact that full rhymes take the place of assonants is a decisive argument against the antiquity, and also against the popular origin, of this ballad in which, as Sr. Menéndez y Pelayo points out, a rather insignificant Garcilaso de la Vega of the end of the fifteenth century is confused with a namesake and relative who fell at Baza in 1455, and is further represented as the hero of a feat of arms—the slaying of a Moor who insultingly attached the device *Ave Maria* to his horse's tail—which was really performed by an ancestor of his about a hundred and fifty years earlier. This later Garcilaso was a favourite of fortune, for, at the end of the sixteenth century, Gabriel Lobo Lasso de la Vega wrote a *romance* ascribing to him Hernando del Pulgar's daring exploit—his riding into Granada, fastening with his dagger a placard inscribed *Ave Maria* to the door of the chief mosque, and thus proclaiming his intention of converting it into a Christian church.

It is needless to discuss Lockhart's group of so-called

[1] *Primavera*, No. 88; Durán, No. 1102.
[2] *Primavera*, No. 134; Durán, No. 1131.
[3] *Primavera*, No. 93; Durán, No. 1121.

'Moorish ballads.'[1] If any one wishes to translate a *romance* of this kind, let him try to convey to us the adroitly suggested orientalism of

> Yo me era mora Moraima, morilla de un bel catar:
> cristiano vino á mi puerta, cuitada, por me engañar.[2]

With scarcely an exception, the 'Moorish ballads' show no trace of Moorish origin, and with very few exceptions, they are not popular ballads. They are clever, artificial presentations of the picturesque Moor as suggested in the anonymous *Historia de Abindarraez*, and elaborated by Pérez de Hita. We do not put it too high in saying that Pérez de Hita's *Guerras civiles de Granada*—the earliest historical novel—is responsible for all the impossible Moors and incredible Moorish women of poetry and fiction.

> Unmask me now these faces,
> Unmuffle me these Moorish men, and eke these dancing Graces . . .
> To give ye merry Easter I 'll make my meaning plain,
> Mayhap it never struck you, we have Christians here in Spain.

---

[1] The original of *The Bull-fight of Gazul* is Durán, No. 45:—

> Estando toda la corte de Almanzor, rey de Granada.

It appears first in the *Romancero general*: so also does the original of *The Zegri's Bride*, Durán, No. 188.

> Lisaro que fue en Granada cabeza de los Cegríes.

The Bridal of Andalla represents Durán, No. 128:—

> Ponte á las rejas azules, deja la manga que labras.

The verses entitled *Zara's Earrings* are altogether out of place in this section. The orientalism is Lockhart's own; there is no mention of 'Zara,' 'Muça,' 'Granada,' 'Albuharez' daughter,' and 'Tunis' in the original, which will be found in Durán, No. 1803.

> ¡La niña morena, que yendo á la [illegible]
> perdió sus zarcillos, gran pena merece!

The Lamentation for Celin represents a poem first printed in the *Romancero general*, and given in Durán, No. 126.

[2] *Primavera*, No. 132; Durán, No. 3.

But Góngora's voice was as the voice of one crying in the wilderness. The tide rose, overflowed the Pyrenees, floated Mademoiselle de Scudéri's *Almahide* and Madame de Lafayette's *Zaïde* into fashion, and did not ebb till long after Washington Irving followed Pérez de Hita's lead by ascribing his graceful, fantastic *Chronicle of the Conquest of Granada* to a non-existent historian whom he chose to call Fray Antonio Agapida. The Moor of fiction is so much more attractive than the Moor of history that he has imposed himself upon the world. Most of us still see him, with the light of other days around him, as we first met him in Scott's *Talisman,* or in Chateaubriand's *Aventures du dernier Abencérage.* Still the fact remains that he is a conventional lay-figure, and that a Spanish poem in which he appears transfigured and glorified is neither ancient nor popular, but is necessarily the work of some late Spanish writer who knows no more of Moors than he can gather from Pérez de Hita's gorgeously imaginative pages.

No serious fault can be found with Lockhart's selection of what he calls 'Romantic Ballads.' Most of them are excellent examples, though *The Moor Calaynos,* an abbreviated rendering of

Ya cabalga Calaynos á la sombra de una oliva,[1]

is no longer 'generally believed to be among the most ancient' ballads. It was certainly widely known, as Lockhart says, for tags from it have become proverbs; but it mentions Prester John and the Sultan of Babylon, and these personages are unknown to genuine old popular poetry. According to Milá y Fontanals and Sr. Menéndez y Pelayo, the Calaínos ballad is one of the latest in the

[1] *Primavera,* No. 193; Durán, No. 373.

Charlemagne cycle, and is derived from a Provençal version of *Fierabras*. On the other hand, the original of *The Escape of Gayferos*—

Estábase la condesa en su estrado asentada [1]—

is an authentic old popular *romance* derived, it is believed, more or less directly from the *Roman de Berthe*, while the much later *Melisendra* ballad—

El cuerpo preso en Sansueña y en Paris cautiva el alma [2]—

owes most of its celebrity to the fact that it is quoted by Ginés de Pasamonte when he acts as showman of the puppets in *Don Quixote*. Again, *The Lady Alda's Dream*—

En Paris está doña Alda la esposa de don Roldan [3]—

is an ancient *romance* of intensely pathetic beauty suggested by the famous passage in the *Chanson de Roland* describing Charlemagne's announcement of Roland's death to his betrothed Alde, Oliver's sister:—

'Soer, chere amie, d'hume mort me demandes . . .'
Alde respunt: 'Cist moz mei est estranges.
Ne placet Deu ne ses seinz ne ses angles
Après Rollant que jo vive remaigne!'
Pert la culur, chiet as piez Carlemagne,
Sempres est morte. Deus ait mercit de l'anmé!

Another famous ballad in the Charlemagne cycle, translated by Lockhart under the title of *The Admiral Guarinos*—

Mala la vistes, franceses, la caza de Roncesvalles [4]—

is also universally known from its being quoted in *Don*

[1] *Primavera*, No. 171; Durán, No. 374. [2] Durán, No. 379.
[3] *Primavera*, No. 184; Durán, No. 400.
[4] *Primavera*, No. 186; Durán, No. 402.

Quixote. Its origin is not clear, but it seems to be related to *Ogier le Danois,* and it has certainly lived long and travelled far if, as Georg Adolf Erman reports, it was sung in Russian in Siberia as recently as 1828. A more special interest attaches to the fine elfin ballad—

A cazar va el caballero, á cazar como solía[1]—

which Lockhart entitles *The Lady of the Tree.* It is, as he says, 'one of the few old Spanish ballads in which mention is made of the Fairies,' and the seven years' enchantment reminded him of 'those Oriental fictions, the influence of which has stamped so many indelible traces on the imaginative literature of Spain.' The theory of Oriental influence is not brought forward so often nowadays, and is challenged in what was thought to be its impregnable stronghold. The melancholy Kelt has taken the place of the slippery Oriental; but theories come and go, and we can only hope that our grandchildren will smile as indulgently at our Kelts as we smile at our grandfathers' Arabs.

Hélo, hélo por do viene el infante vengador[2]

is the original of *The Avenging Childe,* a superb ballad which is better represented in Gibson's version. Compare, for instance, the following translation with Lockhart's:—

'Tis a right good spear, with a point so sharp, the toughest ploughshare might pierce,
For seven times o'er was it tempered fine, in the blood of a dragon fierce,
And seven times o'er was it whetted keen, till it shone with a deadly glance,
For its steel was wrought in the finest forge, in the realm of mighty France.

---

[1] *Primavera,* No. 151; Durán, No. 295.
[2] *Primavera,* No. 150; Durán, No. 294.

Its shaft was made of the Aragon wood, as straight as the straightest stalk,
And he polished the steel, as he galloped along, on the wings of his hunting hawk;
'Don Quadros, thou traitor vile, beware! I'll slay thee where thou dost stand,
At the judgment seat, by the Emperor's side, with the rod of power in his hand.'

This is more faithful, and consequently more vivid; and the retention of the Emperor, whom Lockhart (for metrical purposes) reduces to a King, gives the English reader a useful hint that the ballad belongs to the Charlemagne series. But its source is obscure, and its symbolism is as perplexing as symbolism is apt to be.

All who have read *Birds of Passage*—that is to say, everybody who reads anything—will

> remember the black wharves and the slips,
> And the sea-tides tossing free;
> And Spanish sailors with bearded lips,
> And the beauty and mystery of the ships
> And the magic of the sea.

These lines are recalled by *Count Arnaldos*, Lockhart's translation of the enchanting *romance* which Longfellow has incorporated in *The Seaside and the Fireside*[1]:—

---

[1] Ah! what pleasant visions haunt me
As I gaze upon the sea!
All the old romantic legends,
All my dreams, come back to me.

Sails of silk and ropes of sandal,
Such as gleam in ancient lore;
And the singing of the sailors,
And the answer from the shore!

Most of all, the Spanish ballad
Haunts me oft, and tarries long,
Of the noble Count Arnaldos
And the sailor's mystic song.

¡ Quien hubiese tal ventura sobre las aguas del mar,
como hubo el Conde Arnaldos la mañana de san Juan ![1]

Probably nine out of every ten readers would turn to the *Buch der Lieder* for the loveliest lyric on the witchery of song :—

Die schönste Jungfrau sitzet
Dort oben wunderbar,
Ihr goldnes Geschmeide blitzet,
Sie kämmt ihr goldenes Haar.

Sie kämmt es mit goldenem Kamme,
Und singt ein Lied dabei ;
Das hat eine wundersame,
Gewaltige Melodei. . . .

Ich glaube, die Wellen verschlingen
Am Ende Schiffer und Kahn !
Und das hat mit ihrem Singen
Die Lore-Ley gethan.

They may be right, but, if the tenth reader preferred *El*

Like the long waves on a sea-beach,
Where the sand as silver shines,
With a soft, monotonous cadence
Flow its unrhymed lyric lines ;—

Telling how the Count Arnaldos,
With his hawk upon his hand,
Saw a fair and stately galley,
Steering onward to the land ;—

How he heard the ancient helmsman
Chant a song so wild and clear,
That the sailing sea-bird slowly
Poised upon the mast to hear,

Till his soul was full of longing,
And he cried with impulse strong,—
'Helmsman ! for the love of heaven,
Teach me, too, that wondrous song !'

'Wouldst thou,' so the helmsman answered,
'Learn the secret of the sea ?
Only those who brave its dangers
Comprehend its mystery !'

[1] *Primavera*, No. 153 ; Durán, No. 286.

Conde Arnaldos, I should not think him wrong. Though Heine speaks of

Ein Märchen aus alten Zeiten,

this seems to be a *façon de parler,* for the Lorelei legend was invented by Clemens Brentano barely twenty years before Heine wrote his famous ballad. However this may be, in producing his effect of mystic weirdness the German artist does not eclipse the anonymous Spanish singer who lived four centuries earlier. This is a bold thing to say; yet nobody who reads *El Conde Arnaldos* will think it much too bold.

Passing by a pleasing song (not in the *romance* form),[1] we come to the incomplete *Julianesa* ballad which Lockhart printed, so he tells us, chiefly because it contained an allusion to the pretty Spanish custom of picking flowers on St. John's Day :—

¡ Arriba, canes, arriba ! ¡ que rabia mala os mate ![2]

But, so far from being (like its immediate predecessor in Lockhart's book) an artistic performance, the *Julianesa* ballad is one of the most primitive in the Gayferos group. Its robust inspiration is in striking contrast to the too dulcet *Song of the Galley,*[3] which is followed by *The Wandering Knight's Song,* a capital version of a *romance* famous all the world over owing to its quotation by Don Quixote at the inn :—

Mis arreos son las armas, mi descanso es pelear.[4]

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[1] Depping, IV., No. 19, p. 418 :—

À coger el trebol, Damas !
La mañana de san Juan,
À coger el trebol, Damas !
Que despues no avrà lugar.

[2] *Primavera,* No. 124; Durán, No. 8. [3] Durán, No. 1808.
[4] *Primavera,* No. 125: Durán, No. 300.

We need say nothing of the *Serenade*,[1] *The Captive Knight and the Blackbird*,[2] *Valladolid*,[3] and *Dragut the Corsair*.[4] We should gladly exchange these translations of late and mediocre originals for versions of

Fonte-frida, fonte-frida, fonte-frida y con amor ;[5]

or of one of the few but interesting ballads belonging to the Breton cycle, such as the old *romance* on Lancelot from which Antonio de Nebrija quotes—

Tres hijuelos habia el rey, tres hijuelos, que no mas ;[6]

or of the curious *romance* glossed by Gil Vicente, Cristóbal de Castillejo, and Jorge de Montemôr—

La bella mal maridada, de las lindas que yo ví ;[7]

or of the well-known ballad which seems to have strayed out of the series of *romances fronterizos*—

Mi padre era de Ronda, y mi madre de Antequera.[8]

Fortunately these have been translated by Gibson. But we must not part from Lockhart on bad terms, for he ends with the ballad of *Count Alarcos and the Infante Solisa* :—

Retraída está la Infanta bien así como solía.[9]

This *romance*, which is often ascribed to a certain Pedro de Riaño, is certainly not older than the sixteenth century, and is rather an artistic than a popular poem ; but it is unquestionably an impressive composition remarkable for concentrated and pathetic beauty.

[1] *Romancero general* (Madrid, 1604), p. 407*v*. [2] Durán, No. 1454.
[3] Durán, No. 292. [4] *Ibid.*, No. 274.
[5] *Primavera*, No. 116 ; Durán, No. 1446.
[6] *Primavera*, No. 147 ; Durán, No. 351.
[7] *Primavera*, No. 142 ; Durán, No. 1459.
[8] *Primavera*, No. 131 ; Durán, No. 255.
[9] *Primavera*, No. 163 ; Durán, No. 365.

Though I have far outrun my allotted time, I have merely brushed the fringe of the subject; still, perhaps enough has been said to stir your interest, and to set you reading the *Romancero* under the sagacious guidance of Sr. Menéndez y Pelayo. That will occupy you for many a long day. To those who have not the time to read everything, but who wish to read the very best of the best, I cannot be wrong in recommending the exquisite selection of *romances* published by M. Foulché-Delbosc a few months ago.[1]

[1] *XV. Romances.* (Ordenólos R. Foulché-Delbosc.) Barcelona [1907].

CHAPTER V

THE LIFE OF CERVANTES

Some men live their romances, and some men write them. It was given to Cervantes to do both, and, as his art was not of the impersonal order, it is scarcely possible to read his work without a desire to know more of the rich and imposing individuality which informs it. Posthumous legends are apt to form round men of the heroic type who have been neglected while alive, and posterity seems to enjoy this cheap form of atonement. Cervantes is a case in point. But the researches of the last few years have brought much new material to light, and have dissipated a cloud of myths concerning him: we are not yet able to see him as he was at every stage of his chequered career, but we are nearer him than we ever were before. We are passing out of the fogs of fable, and are learning that, in Cervantes's case, facts are as strange as fiction—and far more interesting.

It is a foible with the biographers of great men to furnish their heroes with a handsome equipment of ancestors, and Cervantes's descent has been traced back to the end of the tenth century by these amateur genealogists. We may admire their industry, and reject their conclusions. It is quite possible that Cervantes was of good family, but we cannot go further back than two generations. His grandfather, Juan de Cervantes, appears to have been a country lawyer who died, without attaining distinction or fortune, about the middle of the sixteenth century. Juan's son was Rodrigo de Cervantes who married Leonor de Cortinas: and

the great novelist was the fourth of their seven children. Rodrigo de Cervantes was a lowly precursor of Sangrado—a simple apothecary-surgeon, of inferior professional status, seldom settled long in one place, earning a precarious living by cupping and blistering. His son Miguel was born at Alcalá de Henares—possibly, as his name suggests, on St. Michael's Day (September 29)—and he was baptized there on Sunday, October 9, 1547, in the church of Santa María la Mayor. There was a tradition that Cervantes matriculated at Alcalá, and his name was discovered in the university registers by an investigator who looked for it with the eye of faith. This is one of many pleasing, pious legends. Rodrigo de Cervantes was not in a position to send his sons to universities. A poor, helpless, sanguine man, he wandered in quest of patients and fortune from Alcalá to Valladolid, from Valladolid to Madrid, from Madrid to Seville, and it has been conjectured that Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra spent some time in the Jesuit school at Seville. The dog Berganza, in the *Coloquio de los Perros*, recalls his edification at 'seeing the loving-kindness, the discretion, the solicitude and the skill with which those saintly fathers and masters taught these lads, so that the tender shoots of their youth should not be twisted, nor take a wrong bend in the path of virtue which, together with the humane letters, they continually pointed out to them.' But it is evident that Cervantes can have had little formal schooling. He was educated in the university of practical experience, and picked up his learning as he could.

He made the most of his casual opportunities. Obviously the man who wrote *Don Quixote* must have read the books of chivalry, the leading poets, the chronicles, dramatic romances like the *Celestina*, picaresque novels like *Lazarillo de Tormes*, pastoral tales like the *Diana*, the *cancioneros*,

and countless broadsides containing popular ballads; and he must have read them at this time, for his maturer years were spent in campaigning, or in the discharge of petty, exacting duties. In his early youth, too, he made acquaintance with the theatre, witnessing the performances of the enterprising Lope de Rueda, actor, manager and playwright, the first man in Spain to set up a travelling booth, and bid for public support. The impression was ineffaceable: from Cervantes's account of his experience, given half a century later, it may be gathered that he listened and watched with the uncritical rapture of a clever, ardent lad, and that his ambition to become a successful dramatist was born there and then. In the meantime, while following his father in his futile journeys, he received a liberal education. Jogging along the high-road, lodging in wayside inns, strolling in market-places, he met men and women of all ranks, from nobles to peasants, and thus began to hoard his literary capital.

Like most young men of literary ambition, Cervantes began by versifying, and, as he never grew old in heart, he versified as long as he lived. A sonnet, written between 1560 and 1568, has come to light recently, and is interesting solely as the earliest extant work of Cervantes. By 1566 he was settled in Madrid, and two years later he wrote a series of elegiacs on the death of the Queen, Isabel de Valois: these were published in a volume edited by Juan López de Hoyos, a Madrid schoolmaster, who refers to Cervantes as his 'dear and beloved pupil.' As the pupil was twenty before López de Hoyos's school was founded, the meaning of the phrase is obscure. Perhaps Cervantes had been a pupil under López de Hoyos elsewhere: perhaps he was an usher in López de Hoyos's new school: frankly, we know nothing of his circumstances. He makes his formal

entry into literature, and then vanishes out of sight, and apparently out of Spain. What happened to him at this time is obscure. We know on his own statement that he was once *camarero* to Cardinal Giulio Acquaviva; we know that Acquaviva, not yet a Cardinal, was in Madrid during the winter of 1568, and that he started for Rome towards the end of the year; and we know from documentary evidence that Cervantes was in Rome at the end of the following year. How he got there, how and when he entered Acquaviva's service, or when and why he left it—these, as Sir Thomas Browne would say, are all 'matters of probable conjecture.'

While Cervantes was in Rome, a league was forming by Spain, Venice and the Holy See against the Sultan Selim: war was in sight, and every high-spirited young Spaniard in Italy must have felt that his place was in the ranks. It has been thought that Cervantes served as a supernumerary before he joined Acquaviva's household; but we do not reach solid ground till 1571 when Cervantes is discovered as a soldier in a company commanded by Diego de Urbina, 'a famous captain of Guadalajara,' as the Captive in *Don Quixote* called him thirty-four years later. Urbina's company belonged to the celebrated *tercio* of Miguel de Moncada, and in September 1571 it was embarked at Messina on the *Marquesa*, one of the galleys under the command of Don John of Austria. At dawn on Sunday, October 7, Don John's armada lay off the Curzolarian Islands when two sail were sighted on the horizon, and soon afterwards the Turkish fleet followed. Cervantes was ill with fever, but refused to listen to his comrades who begged him to stay below: death in the service of God and the King, he said, was preferable to remaining under cover. The *Marquesa* was in the hottest of the fight at Lepanto, and when the battle was won

Cervantes had received three wounds, two in the chest, and one in the left hand. Like most old soldiers, he loved to fight his battles over again, and, to judge from his writings, he was at least as proud of having been at Lepanto as of creating Don Quixote and Sancho Panza.

He was in hospital for seven months at Messina, received an increase of pay, and returned to duty in April 1572. This throws light upon a personal matter. Current likenesses of Cervantes, all imaginary and most of them mere variants of the portrait contrived in the eighteenth century by William Kent, usually represent him as having lost an arm. This is manifestly wrong: a one-armed private would have been discharged as not worth his pay and rations. Cervantes was appointed to Manuel Ponce de León's company in the *tercio* of Lope de Figueroa—the vehement martinet who appears in Calderón's *Alcalde de Zalamea*—and took part in three campaigns; he was present at the fiasco of Navarino in 1572, at the occupation of Tunis in 1573, and at the attempted relief of the Goletta in 1574. He had already done garrison duty in Genoa and Sardinia, and was now stationed successively at Palermo and Naples. It was clear that there was to be no more fighting for a while, and, as there was no opening for Cervantes in Italy, he determined to seek promotion in Spain. Don John of Austria recommended him for a company in one of the regiments then being raised for Italy, and laid stress upon his 'merits and services,' and a similar recommendation was made by the Duke of Sesa, Viceroy of Sicily. These flattering credentials and testimonials were destined to cause much embarrassment and suffering to the bearer; but they encouraged him to make for Spain with a confident heart.

His optimism was to be put to the proof. On September

26, 1575, the *Sol*, with Cervantes and his brother Rodrigo on board, was separated from the rest of the Spanish squadron in the neighbourhood of Les Saintes Maries near Marseilles, and was captured by Moorish pirates. The desperate resistance of the Spaniards was unavailing; they were overcome by superior numbers and were carried off to Algiers. What follows would seem extravagant in a romance of adventures, but the details are supported by irrefragable evidence. As Algiers was at this time the centre of the slave-trade, the prisoners cannot have felt much doubt as to what was in store for them. Cervantes's first owner was a certain Dali Mami, a Greek renegade, and captain of a galley. He read the recommendatory letters from Don John of Austria and the Duke of Sessa, and (not unnaturally) jumped at the conclusion that he had drawn a prize: his slave might not be of great use so far as manual labour was concerned, but any one who was personally acquainted with two such personages as Don John and the Duke must presumably be a man of consequence, and would assuredly be worth a heavy ransom. The first result of this fictitious importance was that Cervantes was put in irons, and chains; and, when these were at last removed, he was carefully watched.

Cervantes found means to baffle his sentries. His first attempt to escape was made in 1576: it was an ignominious failure. He and his fellow-prisoners set out on foot to walk to Orán, the nearest Spanish outpost; their Moorish guide played them false, and there was nothing for it but to go back to Algiers. In 1577 Rodrigo de Cervantes was ransomed—he was reckoned cheaper than his brother—and he undertook to send a vessel to carry off Miguel and his friends. Meanwhile Cervantes enlisted the sympathies of a Spanish renegade, a gardener from Navarre

named Juan; between them they dug out a cave in a garden near the sea, and smuggled into it one by one fourteen Christian slaves who were secretly fed during several months with the help of another renegade from Melilla, a scoundrel known as *El Dorador*. It is easier to say that the scheme was a bad one than to suggest anything better: it was within an ace of succeeding. The vessel sent by Rodrigo de Cervantes drew near the shore on September 28, and was on the point of embarking those hidden in the cave when a Moorish fishing-boat passed by and scared the crew, who stood out to sea again. A second attempt at a rescue was made, but it was too late. The plot had been revealed by *El Dorador* to Hassan Pasha, the Dey of Algiers, and, when some of the crew landed to convey the fugitives on board, the garden was surrounded by Hassan's troops. The entire band of Christians was captured, and Cervantes at once avowed himself the sole organiser of the conspiracy. Brought bound before Hassan, he adhered to his statement that his comrades were innocent, and that he took the entire responsibility for the plot. The gardener was hanged; after some hesitation, Hassan decided to spare Cervantes's life, and finally bought him from Dali Mami for five hundred crowns.

It is difficult to account for this act of relative mercy in a man who is described in *Don Quixote* as the murderer of the human race, a hæmatomaniac who delighted in murder for murder's sake, one who hanged, impaled, tortured and mutilated his prisoners every day. It may be that he was genuinely struck by Cervantes's unflinching courage; it may be that he expected an immense ransom for a man who was plainly the leader of the captives. What is certain is that Cervantes was now Hassan's slave; though imprisoned in irons, he soon showed that his heroic spirit

was unbroken. He sent a letter to Martín de Córdoba, the governor of Orán, asking for aid to enable himself and three other captives to escape; the messenger seemed likely to fulfil his mission, but was arrested close to Orán, sent back, and impaled. For writing the letter Cervantes was sentenced to two thousand blows, but the sentence was remitted, and it would almost seem as though Cervantes completely forgot the incident, for in *Don Quixote* he goes out of his way to record that *un tal Saavedra*—a certain Saavedra, Something-or-Other Saavedra (who can be nobody but himself)—was never struck by Hassan, and was never threatened by Hassan with a blow. This may appear perplexing, but as the writer goes on to say that Hassan never addressed a harsh word to this Saavedra, it is plain that the whole passage is an idealistic arabesque; the discrepancy between the gloss and the facts shows the danger of seeking exact biographical data in any imaginative work, however heavily freighted with personal reminiscences.

Hassan remitted the sentence, and, remarking that 'so long as he had the maimed Spaniard in custody, his Christians, ships and the entire city were safe,' he redoubled his vigilance. For two years the prisoner made no move, but plainly he was not resigned nor disheartened, for he conceived the idea of inducing the Christian population of Algiers to rise and capture the city. It was no mad, impossible project; a similar rising had been successful at Tunis in 1535, and there were over twenty thousand Christians in Algiers. Once more Cervantes was betrayed, and once more he escaped death. A less ambitious scheme also miscarried. In 1579 he took into his confidence a Spanish renegade and two Valencian traders, and persuaded the Valencians to provide an armed vessel to rescue him and some sixty other Christian slaves; but before the plan could

be carried out it was revealed to Hassan by a Dominican monk, Juan Blanco de Paz. Very little is known of Blanco de Paz, except that he came from Montemolín near Llerena, and that he gave himself out as being a commissary and familiar of the Inquisition. Why he should turn informer at all, is a mystery: why he should single out Cervantes as the special object of his hatred is no less a mystery. The Valencian merchants got wind of his treachery, and, dreading lest they might be implicated, begged Cervantes to make his escape on a ship which was about to start for Spain. To accept this proposal would have been to desert his friends and to imperil their lives: Cervantes rejected it, assuring the alarmed Valencians that he would not reveal anything to compromise them, even if he were tortured. He was as good as his word. Brought into Hassan's presence with his hands tied behind him and the hangman's rope round his neck, he was threatened with instant death unless he gave up the names of his accomplices. But he was undaunted and immovable, asserting that the plot had been planned by himself and four others who had got away, and that no one else had any active share in it. Perhaps there was a certain economy of truth in this statement, but it served its immediate purpose: though Cervantes was placed under stricter guard, Hassan spared the other sixty slaves involved.

This was Cervantes's last attempt to escape. His family were doing what they could to procure his release. They were miserably poor, and poverty often drives honest people into strange courses. To excite pity, and so obtain a concession which would help towards ransoming her son, Cervantes's mother passed herself off as a widow, though her husband was still alive, a superfluous old man, now grown incurably deaf, and with fewer patients than ever.

By means of such dubious expedients some two hundred and fifty ducats were collected and entrusted to Fray Juan Gil and Fray Antón de la Bella, two monks engaged in ransoming the Christian slaves at Algiers. The sum was insufficient. Hassan curtly told Fray Juan Gil that all his slaves were gentlemen, that he should not part with any of them for less than five hundred ducats, and that for Jerónimo de Palafox (apparently an Aragonese of some position) he should ask a ransom of a thousand ducats. Fray Juan Gil was specially anxious to release Palafox, and made an offer of five hundred ducats; but Hassan would not abate his terms. The Dey and the monk haggled from spring till autumn. Hassan then went out of office, and made ready to leave for Constantinople to give an account of his stewardship. His slaves were already embarked on September 19, 1580, when Fray Juan Gil, seeing that there was no hope of obtaining Palafox's release by payment of five hundred ducats, ransomed Cervantes for that sum. It is disconcerting to think that, if the Trinitarian friar had been able to raise another five hundred ducats, we might never have had *Don Quixote*. Palafox would have been set at liberty, while Cervantes went up the Dardanelles to meet a violent death in a last attempt at flight.

He stepped ashore a free man after five years of slavery, but his trials in Algiers were not ended. The enigmatic villain of the drama, Juan Blanco de Paz, had been busy trumping up false charges to be lodged against Cervantes in Spain. It was a base and despicable act duly denounced by the biographers; but we have reason to be grateful to Blanco de Paz, for Cervantes met the charges by summoning eleven witnesses to character who testified before Fray Juan Gil. Their evidence proves that Cervantes was recognised as a man of singular courage, kindliness, piety and virtue;

that his authority among his fellow-prisoners had excited the malicious jealousy of Bianco de Paz who endeavoured to corrupt some of the witnesses; and—ludicrous detail!—that the informer had been rewarded for his infamy with a ducat and a jar of butter. This testimony, recorded by a notary, is confirmed by the independent evidence of Fray Juan Gil himself, and by Doctor Antonio de Sosa, a prisoner of considerable importance who answered the twenty-five interrogatories in writing. The enquiry makes us acquainted with all the circumstances of Cervantes's captivity, and shows that he was universally regarded as an heroic leader by those best able to judge.

His vindication being complete, he left Algiers for Denia on October 24, and reached Madrid at some date previous to December 18. His position was lamentable. He was in his thirty-fourth year, and had to begin life again. Perhaps if Don John had lived, Cervantes might have returned to the army; but Don John was dead, and his memory was not cherished at court. Cervantes had no degree, no profession, no trade, no craft except that of sonneteering: his life had been spent in the service of the King, and he endeavoured to obtain some small official post. Accordingly he made for Portugal, recently annexed by Philip II., tried to find an opening, and was sent as King's messenger to Oran with instructions to call at Mostaganem with despatches from the Alcalde. The mission was speedily executed, and Cervantes found himself adrift. He settled in Madrid, made acquaintance with some prominent authors of the day, and, in default of more lucrative employment, betook himself to literature. He was always ready to furnish a friend with a eulogistic sonnet on that friend's immortal masterpiece, and thus acquired a certain reputation as a facile, fluent versifier. But sonnets are expensive

luxuries, and Cervantes wanted bread. He earned it by writing for the stage: to this period no doubt we must assign the *Numancia* and *Los Tratos de Argel*, as well as many other pieces which have not survived. Cervantes was like the players in *Hamlet*. Seneca was not too heavy, nor Plautus too light for him: he was ready to supply 'tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited.' It was a hard struggle to keep the wolf from the door, but perhaps this was the happiest period of Cervantes's life. He was on friendly terms with poets like Pedro de Padilla and Juan Rufo Gutiérrez; managers did not pay him lavishly for his plays, but at least they were set upon the stage, and the applause of the pit was to him the sweetest music in the world. Moreover, following the example of his friend Luis Gálvez de Montalvo, he was engaged upon a prose pastoral, and, with his optimistic nature, he easily persuaded himself that this romance would make his reputation—and perhaps his fortune. He was now nearing the fatal age of forty, and it was high time to put away the follies of youth. Breaking off a fugitive amour with a certain Ana Franca (more probably Francisca) de Rojas, he married a girl of nineteen, Catalina de Palacios Salazar y Vozmediano, daughter of a widow owning a moderate estate at Esquivias, a small town near Toledo, then famous for its wine, as Cervantes is careful to inform us. Doubtless his courtship was like Othello's.

> I spake of most disastrous chances,
> Of moving accidents by flood and field,
> Of hair-breadth 'scapes i' the imminent deadly breach,
> Of being taken by the insolent foe
> And sold to slavery, of my redemption thence
> And portance in my travels' history.

This to hear would Catalina seriously incline, yet there is reason to think that the members of her family were less susceptible, and regarded Cervantes as an undesirable suitor. He undoubtedly was, from a mundane point of view; but the marriage took place on December 12, 1584, and next spring the First Part of *La Galatea* (which had been licensed in the previous February) was published. It is perhaps not without significance that the volume was issued at Alcalá de Henares: it would have been more natural and probably more advantageous to publish the book at Madrid where Cervantes resided, but his name carried no weight with the booksellers of the capital, and no doubt he was glad enough to strike a bargain with his fellow-townsman Blas de Robles. Robles behaved handsomely, for he paid the author, then unknown outside a small literary circle, a fee of 1336 *reales* —say £30, equal (we are told) to nearly £150 nowadays. Perhaps some modern novelists have received even less for their first work. With this small capital the newly-married couple set up house in Madrid: the bride had indeed a small dowry including forty-five chickens, but the dowry was not made over to her till twenty months later. The marriage does not seem to have been unhappy, as marriages go; but, owing to Cervantes's wandering existence, the pair saw little of each other till the last ten or twelve years of their married life.

By the death of his father on June 13, 1585, Cervantes became the head of the family, and the position was no sinecure. His sister Luisa had entered the convent of Barefooted Carmelites at Alcalá de Henares twenty years before this date, and his brother Rodrigo had been promoted to a commission in the army for his signal gallantry at the Azores. But Cervantes's mother and his sisters, Andrea and Magdalena, were unprovided for, and looked to him

for help. He resumed writing for the stage, and is found witnessing a legal document at the request of Inés Osorio, wife of the theatrical manager Jerónimo Velázquez, with whose name that of Lope de Vega is unpleasantly associated. Now, if not earlier,—as a complimentary allusion in the *Galatea* might suggest—Cervantes must have met that marvellous youth who was shortly to become the most popular dramatist of the age. Meanwhile Cervantes's affairs were going ill. According to his own statement he wrote from twenty to thirty plays between 1582 and 1587; but these plays cannot have brought him much money, for there are proofs that some of his family sold outright to a pawnbroker certain articles which Cervantes had left in pledge two years before. Clearly he was hard pressed. He eked out his income by accepting other work unconnected with literature, executed business commissions as far away as Seville, and looked around for permanent employment. He found it as commissary to the Invincible Armada which was then fitting out, and in the autumn of 1587 he took up his new duties in Andalusia. This amounts to a confession of defeat. If a man of exceptional literary genius can thrive on literature, he does not abandon it for a less agreeable occupation. It is a fine thing to write masterpieces, but in order to write them you must contrive to live. Cervantes's masterpieces lay in the future, and in the meantime he felt the pinch of hunger.

He appears to have obtained his appointment through the influence of a judge in the High Court of Seville, Diego de Valdivia, a namesake of the affable captain in *El Licenciado Vidriera*; and, after a few months' probation, his appointment was confirmed anew in January 1588. He had already discovered that there were serious inconveniences attaching to his post, for he had incurred excom-

munication for an irregular seizure of wheat at Écija. It would be tedious to follow him in his professional visits to the outlying districts of Andalusia. Everything comes to an end at last—even the equipment of the Invincible Armada: when the fleet sailed to meet the enemy Cervantes cheered it on to victory with an enthusiastic ode, and in a second ode he deplored the great catastrophe. He continued in the public service as commissary to the galleys, collecting provisions at a salary of twelve *reales* a day, making Seville his centre, and lodging in the house of Tomás Gutiérrez. Weary of the sordid life, he applied in 1590 for a post in America, but failed to obtain it. At the end of the petition, Doctor Núñez Morquecho wrote: 'Let him seek some employment hereabouts.' Blessings on Doctor Núñez Morquecho, the conscientious official! If he had granted the petitioner's request, Cervantes might have been more prosperous, but he would not have written *Don Quixote*. He was forced to remain where he was, engulfed in arid and vexatious routine.

Still one would imagine that he must have discharged his duties efficiently, for he was one of four commissaries specially commended to the King in January 1592 by the new Purveyor-General Pedro de Isunza. Meanwhile his condition grew rather worse than better: his poverty was extreme. The financial administration was thoroughly disorganised, and in 1591 Cervantes had not yet received his salary for 1588. He seems (not unnaturally) to have lost interest in his work, and to have become responsible for the indiscreet proceedings of a subordinate at Teba. Henceforward he was in constant trouble with the authorities. In August 1592 his accounts were found to be irregular, and his five sureties were compelled to pay the balance; he was imprisoned at Castro del Río in September

for alleged illegal perquisitioning at Écija, but was released on appeal. Now and then he was tempted to return to literature. He signed a contract at Seville early in September 1592 undertaking to furnish the manager, Rodrigo Osorio, with six plays at fifty ducats apiece: the conditions of the agreement were that Osorio was to produce each play within twenty days of its being delivered to him, and that Cervantes was to receive nothing unless the play was 'one of the best that had been acted in Spain.' The imprisonment at Castro del Río a fortnight later interfered with this project: no more is heard of it, and Cervantes resumed his work as commissary. Two points of personal interest are to be noted in the ensuing years: in the autumn of 1593 Cervantes lost his mother, and in the autumn of 1594 he visited Baza, where (as Sr. Rodríguez Marín has shown recently in an open letter addressed to me[1]) his old enemy Blanco de Paz was residing. As the population of Baza amounted only to 1537 persons at the time, the two men may easily have met: the encounter would have been worth witnessing, for Cervantes was a master of pointed expression.

He passed on his dreary round to Málaga and Ronda, returning to his headquarters at Seville, where, most likely, he wrote the poem in honour of St. Hyacinth which won the first prize at Saragossa on May 7, 1595. As the prize consisted of three silver spoons, it did not greatly relieve his financial embarrassments. These rapidly grew worse. Cervantes had deposited public moneys with a Portuguese banker in Seville; the banker failed and fled, and, as Cervantes was unable to refund the amount, he was suspended. There is a blank in his history from September 1595 to January 1597, when the money was recovered from

[1] *Los Lunes de El Imparcial* (9 de Julio de 1906): '*El peor enemigo de Cervantes.*'

the bankrupt's estate. Cervantes, however, was not restored to his post. This is not surprising; for, though most of us regard him with an affection as real as can be felt for any one who has been in his grave nearly three hundred years, even our partiality stops short of calling him a model official. He was not cast in the official mould. Cervantes, collecting oil and wrangling over corn in Andalusia, is like Samson grinding in the prison house at Gaza. Misfortune pursued him. The treasury accountants called upon him to furnish sureties that he would attend the Exchequer Court at Madrid within twenty days of receiving a summons dated September 6, 1597. Unable to find bail, he was imprisoned till the beginning of December, when he was released with instructions to present himself at Madrid within thirty days. He does not appear to have left Seville, and he neglected a similar summons in February 1599. This may seem like contempt of court, but no doubt the real explanation is that he had not the money to pay for the journey.

On July 2, 1600, Rodrigo de Cervantes, then an ensign serving under the Archduke Albert in Flanders, was killed in action; but Miguel de Cervantes probably did not hear of this till long afterwards. He now vanishes from sight, for there is another blank in his record from May 1601 to February 1603. We may assume that he lived in extreme poverty at Seville, and when next heard of—at Valladolid in 1603—his circumstances had not greatly improved. His sister Andrea was employed as needlewoman by the Marqués de Villafranca, and her little bill is made out in Cervantes's handwriting: clearly every member of the family contributed to the household expenses, and every *maravedí* was welcome. Presumably Cervantes had come to Valladolid in obedience to a peremptory *mandamus* from the Exchequer Court. A brief enquiry must have convinced

the registrars that, with the best will in the world, he was not in a position to make good the sum which (as they alleged) was due to the treasury, and they left him in peace for three years with a cloud over him. He had touched bottom. He had valiantly endured the buffets of fortune, and was now about to enter into his reward.

His mind to him a kingdom was, and during the years of his disgrace in Seville he had lived, unhindered by squalid circumstance, in a pleasaunce of reminiscence and imagination. All other doors being closed to him, he returned to the house of literature, took pen and paper, gave literary form to his experiences and imaginings, and, when drawing on to sixty, produced the masterpiece which has made his name immortal. It may well be, as he himself hints, that *Don Quixote* was begun in Seville jail: perhaps it was finished there. At any rate there was little to be added to it when the author reached Valladolid in 1603—little beyond the preface and burlesque preliminary verses. By the summer of 1604 Cervantes had found a publisher, and it had leaked out that the book contained some caustic references to distinguished contemporaries. This may account for Lope de Vega's opinion, expressed in August 1604 (six months before the work was published), that 'no poet is as bad as Cervantes, nor so silly as to praise *Don Quixote*.' This was not precisely a happy forecast. *Don Quixote* appeared early in 1605, was hailed with delight, and received the dubious compliment of being pirated in Lisbon. Cervantes was the man of the moment, in the first flush of his popularity, when chance played him an unpleasant trick. On the night of June 27, 1605, a Navarrese gallant named Gaspar de Ezpeleta was wounded while in the neighbourhood of the Calle del Rastro, called for aid at the door of No. 11 where Cervantes lodged, was helped into the house, and died there

two days later. The inmates were arrested on suspicion, examined by the magistrate, and released on July 1. The minutes of the examination were unpublished till recent years, and these furtive tactics gravely injured the memory of Cervantes, for they suggested the idea that the examination revealed something to his discredit. It reveals that Cervantes's natural daughter, Isabel de Saavedra (whose mother, Ana Franca de Rojas, had died in 1599 or earlier), was now residing with her father; it proves that Cervantes was still poor, and that calumnious gossip was current in Valladolid; but there is not a tittle of evidence to show that any member of the Cervantes family ever heard of Ezpeleta till he came by his death.

Cervantes had made for himself a great reputation, but *Don Quixote* did not apparently enrich him: otherwise he would not have asked his publisher for an advance of 450 *reales*, as we know that he did at some date previous to November 23, 1607. However, we must renounce the pretension to understand Cervantes's financial affairs. His daughter Isabel, who was unmarried in 1605, reappears in 1608 as the widow of Diego Sanz del Aguila, and as the mother of a daughter: in 1608 she married a certain Luis de Molina, and there are complicated statements respecting a house in the Red de San Luis from which it is impossible to gather whether the house belonged to Isabel, to her daughter, or to her father. We cannot wonder that Cervantes was the despair of the Treasury officials: these officials did, indeed, make a last attempt to extract an explanation from him on November 6 of this very year of 1608, and thenceforward left him in peace.

He settled in Madrid to pass his serene old age. An atmosphere of devotion began to reign in the house in the Calle de la Magdalena where he lived with his wife and

his sisters, Andrea and Magdalena. In 1609 he was among the first to join the newly founded Confraternity of the Slaves of the Most Blessed Sacrament; in the same year his wife received the habit of the Tertiaries of St. Francis, as also did Andrea who died four months later (October 9); in 1610 his wife and his surviving sister Magdalena both became professed Tertiaries of St. Francis. It would appear that Cervantes had been aided by the generosity of the Conde de Lemos, and he could not hide his deep chagrin at not being invited to join the household when Lemos was nominated to the viceroyalty of Naples in 1610. The new viceroy chose better than he knew. Cervantes applied himself more closely to literature which he had neglected (so far as publication goes) for the last five years, and, after the death of his sister Magdalena in 1611, the results of his renewed activity were visible. In 1612, when he became a member of the Academia Selvaje (where we hear of his lending a wretched pair of spectacles to Lope de Vega), he finished his *Novelas Exemplares* which appeared next year. He published his serio-comic poem, the *Viage del Parnaso*, in 1614; in 1615 he issued a volume containing eight plays and eight interludes, and also published the Second Part of *Don Quixote*. It is curious that so many things which must have seemed misfortunes to Cervantes have proved to be a gain to us. In 1614 an apocryphal *Don Quixote* was published at Tarragona by Alonso Fernández de Avellaneda of whom nothing has been discovered, and this spurious sequel contained a preface filled with insolent personalities. If Cervantes had received any one of the appointments in Spanish America for which he petitioned, we should not have had the first *Don Quixote*; if he had gone to Naples with Lemos we should never have had the second; if it had not been for Avellaneda's insults, we

might have had only an unfinished sequel. Cervantes's life was now drawing to a close, but his industry was prodigious. Apart from fugitive verses he was engaged on *Los Trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda,* on a play entitled *El Engaño á los ojos,* the long-promised continuation of the *Galatea,* and two works which he proposed to call *Las Semanas del Jardín* and *El famoso Bernardo.* All are lost to us except *Persiles y Sigismunda* which appeared posthumously in 1617.

We catch interesting glimpses of Cervantes in the last phase. He has left a verbal portrait of himself as he looked when he was sixty-six, and it is the only authentic portrait of him in existence. He was 'of aquiline features, with chestnut hair, smooth and unclouded brow, bright eyes, and a nose arched, though well proportioned, silver beard, once golden twenty years ago, long moustache, small mouth, teeth of no consequence, since he had only six and these in ill condition and worse placed, inasmuch as they do not correspond to one another; stature about the average, neither tall nor short, ruddy complexion, fair rather than dark, slightly stooped in the shoulders, and not very active on his feet.' Two years later Noel Brûlart de Sillery came to Madrid on a special mission from the French Court, and his suite were intensely curious to hear what they could of Cervantes; they learned that he was 'old, a soldier, a gentleman, and poor.' At this time, his health must have begun to fail: it was undoubtedly failing fast while he wrote *Persiles y Sigismunda.* He was apparently dependent on the bounty of Lemos and of Bernardo de Sandoval, the Cardinal-Archbishop of Toledo. The hand of death was on him when he wrote to the Cardinal on March 26, 1616, a letter expressing his gratitude for a recent benefaction. On April 2 he was professed as a Tertiary of St. Francis, and the profession took place at

the house in the Calle de León to which he had removed in 1611 or earlier. He was never to leave it again alive: on April 18 he received Extreme Unction; on April 19 he wrote the celebrated dedication of *Persiles y Sigismunda* to Lemos; on April 23 he died, and on April 24 he was buried in the convent of the Trinitarian nuns in the Calle del Humilladero—the street which now bears the name of his great rival Lope. His wife outlived him by ten years, and his daughter by thirty-six; we hear no more of his granddaughter after 1608. Presumably she died in infancy: if so, the family became extinct upon the death of Isabel de Saavedra in 1652.

Cervantes was no bloodless ascetic, no incarnation of dreary righteousness: we do him wrong, if we present him in that crude, intolerable light. With some defects of character and with some lapses of conduct, he is a more interesting and more attractive personality than if he were—what perhaps no one has ever been—a bundle of almost impossible perfections. He was even as we are, but far nobler—braver, more resigned to disappointment, more patient with the folly which springs eternal in each of us. This inexhaustible sympathy, even more than his splendid genius, is the secret of his conquering charm. He is one of ourselves, only incomparably greater.

> His life was gentle, and the elements
> So mix'd in him that Nature might stand up
> And say to all the world, 'This was a man.'

But it is not for us to write his epitaph. He needs no marble sepulchre, and he has none, for the precise spot where he rests is unknown. He has built himself a lordlier and more imperishable monument than we could fashion for him—a monument which will endure so long as humour, wisdom, and romance enchant mankind.

CHAPTER VI

THE WORKS OF CERVANTES

The best and wisest of men have their delusions—especially with respect to themselves and their capabilities—and Cervantes was not free from such natural infirmities. He made his first appearance in literature with a sonnet addressed to Philip II.'s third wife, Isabel de Valois, and as this poem is not included in any Spanish edition of his works, I make no apology for quoting it (in an English version by Norman MacColl which has not yet been published).

Most Gracious Queen, within whose breast prevail
What thoughts to mortals by God's grace do come,
Oh general refuge of Christendom,
Whose fame for piety can never fail.
Oh happy armour! with that well-meshed mail
Great Philip clothed himself, our sovereign,
Illustrious King of the broad lands of Spain,
Who fortune and the world holds in his baile.
What genius would adventure to proclaim
The good that thine example teaches us;
If thou wert summoned to the realms of day,
Who in thy mortal state put'st us to shame?
Better it is to feel and mutter 'hush,'
Than what is difficult to say, aloud to say.

This is not a masterpiece in little, nor even a marvel of adroitness; but it is highly interesting as the earliest extant effort of one who was destined to become a master, and, moreover, it supplies us with his favourite poetical formulæ. In his description of the Queen as the

general refuge of Christendom,
Whose fame for piety can never fail;

in his allusion to the

Illustrious King of the broad lands of Spain,
Who fortune and the world holds in his baile;

Cervantes strikes the characteristic notes of devotion, patriotism, and loyalty to his sovereign. Though he vastly enlarged the circle of his themes later on, he was sufficiently representative of his own time and country to introduce these three motives into his subsequent writings whenever a plausible occasion offered. This is particularly notable in his fugitive verses. Sainte-Beuve says that nearly all men are born poets, but that, as a rule, the poet in us dies young. It was not so with Cervantes—so far as impulse was concerned. From youth to old age he was a persistent versifier. As we have seen, he first appeared in print with elegiacs on the death of Isabel de Valois; as a slave in Algiers he dedicated sonnets to Bartolomeo Ruffino, and from Algiers also he appealed for help to Mateo Vázquez in perhaps the most spirited and sincere of his poetical compositions; he was not long free from slavery when he supplied Juan Rufo Gutiérrez with a resounding patriotic sonnet, and Pedro de Padilla with devotional poems. As he began, so he continued. He has made merry at the practice of issuing books with eulogistic prefatory poems; but he observed the custom in his own *Galatea*, and he was indefatigable in furnishing such verses to his friends. All subjects came alike to him. He would as soon praise the quips and quillets of López Maldonado as lament the death of the famous admiral Santa Cruz, and he celebrated with equal promptitude a tragic epic on the lovers of Teruel and a technical treatise on kidney diseases. It must, I think, be allowed that Cervantes was readily stirred into song.

At the end of his career, in his mock-heroic *Viage del Parnaso*, he cast a backward glance at his varied achievement in literature, and, with his usual good judgment, admitted wistfully that nature had denied him the gift of poetry. As the phrase stands, and baldly interpreted, it would seem that excessive modesty had led Cervantes to underestimate his powers. He was certainly endowed with imagination, and with a beautifying vision; but, though he had the poet's dream, he had not the faculty of verbal magic. It was not given to him to wed immortal thoughts to immortal music, and this no doubt is what he means us to understand by his ingenuous confession. His verdict is eminently just. Cervantes has occasional happy passages, even a few admirable moments, but no lofty or sustained inspiration. He recognised the fact with that transparent candour which has endeared him to mankind, not dreaming that uncritical admirers in future generations would seek to crown him with the laurel to which he formally resigned all claim. Yet we read appreciations of him as a 'great' poet, and we can only marvel at such misuse of words. If Cervantes be a 'great' poet, what adjective is left to describe Garcilaso, Luis de León, Lope de Vega, Góngora and Calderón?

A sense of measure, of relative values, is the soul of criticism, and we may be appreciative without condescending to idolatry, or even to flattery. Cervantes was a rapid, facile versifier, and at rare intervals his verses are touched with poetry; but, for the most part, they are imitative, and no imitation, however brilliant, is a title to lasting fame. Imitation in itself is no bad sign in a beginner; it is a healthier symptom than the adoption of methods which are wilfully eccentric; but it is a provisional device, to be used solely as a means of attaining one's originality. It cannot

be said that Cervantes ever acquired a personal manner in verse: if he had, there would be far less division of opinion as to whether he is, or is not, the author of such and such poems. He finally acquired a personal manner in prose, but only after an arduous probation.

There are few traces of originality in his earliest prose work, the First Part of *La Galatea*, the pastoral which Cervantes never found time to finish during more than thirty years. I do not think we need suppose that we have lost a masterpiece, though no doubt it would be profoundly interesting to see Cervantes trying to pour new wine into old bottles. The sole interest of the *Galatea*, as we have it, is that it is the first essay in fiction of a great creator who has mistaken his road. There does appear to have existed, long before the composition of the Homeric poems, a primitive pastoral which was popular in character. So historians tell us, and no doubt they are right. But the extant pastoral poetry of Sicily is the latest manifestation of Greek genius, an artistic revolt against the banal conventions of civilisation, an attempt to express a longing for a freer life in a purer air. In other words it is an artificial product. The Virgilian eclogues are still more remote from reality than the idyls of Theocritus: as imitations are bound to be. Artificiality is even more pronounced in the *Arcadia* of Sannazaro who 'prosified' the Virgilian eclogue during the late Renaissance: what else do you expect in an imitation of an imitation? Neither in Sannazaro, nor in his disciple Cervantes, is there a glimpse of real shepherds, nor even of the Theocritean shepherds,—

> Such as sat listening round Apollo's pipe,
> When the great deity, for earth too ripe,
> Let his divinity o'erflowing die
> In music, through the vales of Thessaly.

What we find in the *Galatea* is the imitation by Cervantes of Sannazaro's prose imitation of Virgil's imitation of Theocritus. To us who wish for nothing better than to read Cervantes himself, his ambition to write like somebody else seems misplaced, not to say grotesque. But then, for most of us, Sannazaro has only a relative importance: to Cervantes, Sannazaro was almost Virgil's peer.

Everything connected with the *Galatea* is imitative—the impulse to write it, the matter, and the manner. The *Galatea* is no spontaneous product of the author's fancy; it owes its existence to Sannazaro's *Arcadia*, and to the early Spanish imitations of the *Arcadia* recorded in Professor Rennert's exhaustive monograph. We shall not be far wrong in thinking that it might never have struggled into print, had not Cervantes been encouraged by the example of his friend Luis Gálvez de Montalvo, who had made a hit with *El Pastor de Filida*. So, too, as regards the matter of the *Galatea*. The sixth book is a frank adaptation of the *Arcadia*; there are further reminiscences of Sannazaro's pastoral in both the verse and the prose of the *Galatea*; other allusions are worked in without much regard to their appropriateness; León Hebreo is not too lofty, nor Alonso Pérez too lowly, to escape Cervantes's depredations. Lastly, the manner is no less imitative: construction, arrangement, distribution, diction are all according to precedent. Martínez Marina, indeed, held the odd view that there was something new in the style of the *Galatea*, and that Cervantes and Mariana were the first to move down the steep slope that leads to *culteranismo*. During the hundred years that Martínez Marina's theory has been before the world it has made no converts, and therefore it needs no refutation. But, though the theory is mistaken, some of the facts advanced to support it are indubitable: the *Galatea* is

deliberately latinised in imitation of Sannazaro who sought to reproduce the sustained and sonorous melody of the Ciceronian period. So intent is Cervantes upon the model that his own personality is overwhelmed. He probably never wrote with more scrupulous care than when at work on the *Galatea*, yet all his pains and all his elaborate finish are so much labour lost. Briefly, the *Galatea* is little more than the echo of an echo, and the individual quality of Cervantes's voice is lost amid the reverberations of exotic music.

The sixteenth-century prose-pastoral was a barren product, rooted in a false convention. It was not natural, and it was not artistic: it failed to reproduce the beauty of the old ideal, and it failed to create a modern ideal. It satisfies no canon, and to attempt to make a case for it is to argue for argument's sake. Had Cervantes continued to work this vein, he would never have found his true path, and must have remained an imitator till the end; and it is a mere chance that he did not return to the pastoral and complete the *Galatea*. It was far too often in his thoughts. As his butt Feliciano de Silva would have said, his reason saw 'the unreason of the reason with which the reason is afflicted' when given up to the composition of pastorals; and yet the pastoral romance had a fascination for him. Fortunately, he was saved from a fatal error by the fact that, for nearly twenty years after the publication of the *Galatea*, he was kept against his will in touch with the realities of life: realities often grim, squalid, fantastic, cruel and absurd, but preferable to the pointless philanderings of imaginary swains and nymphs in a pasteboard Arcadia. The surly taxpayers from whom Cervantes had to wring contributions, the clergy who excommunicated and imprisoned him, the alcaldes and jacks-in-office who made his life a

burden, the cheating landlords and strumpets whom he met in miserable inns—these people were not the crown and flower of the human race, but they were not intangible abstractions, nor even persistent bores; they were plain men and women, creatures of flesh and blood, subject to all the passions of humanity, and using vigorous, natural speech instead of euphemisms and preciosities. It was by contact with these rugged folk that Cervantes amassed his wealth of observation, and slowly learned his trade. This was precisely what he needed. After his return from Algiers, and till his marriage, circumstances had thrown him into a literary clique, well-read and well-meaning, but with no vital knowledge of the past and no intellectual interest in the present. The destiny which drove Cervantes to collect provisions and taxes in the villages of the south saved him from the Byzantinism of the capital, and placed him once more in direct relation with nature—especially human nature. This was his salvation as an author. And eighteen years later he produced the First Part of *Don Quixote*.

It would be interesting to know the exact stages of composition of *Don Quixote*, but that is hopeless. We cannot be sure as to when Cervantes began the book, but we may hazard a conjecture. Bernardo de la Vega's *Pastor de Iberia*, one of the books in Don Quixote's library, was published in 1591, and this goes to prove that the sixth chapter was written after this date—probably a good deal later, for this pastoral was a failure, and therefore not likely to come at once into the hands of a busy, roving tax-gatherer. You all remember the incident of Sancho Panza's being tossed in a blanket, and there is a very similar episode in the Third Book of *Guzmán de Alfarache*. Is there any relation between the two? Is it a case of unconscious reminiscence, or is it

simple coincidence? It would be absurd to suppose that Cervantes deliberately took such a trifling incident from a book published six years before his own. Where Cervantes is imitative is in the dedication of the First Part of *Don Quixote,* which is pieced together from Herrera's dedication of his edition of Garcilaso to the Marqués de Ayamonte, and from Francisco de Medina's prologue to the same edition. If the tossing of Sancho Panza were suggested by *Guzmán de Alfarache,* it would follow that the seventeenth chapter of *Don Quixote* was written in 1599, or later, and a remark dropped by Ginés de Pasamonte seems to show that Cervantes had read Mateo Alemán's book without any excessive admiration. But the point is scarcely worth labouring. My own impression is that *Don Quixote* was progressing, but was not yet finished, in 1602.

Consider the facts a moment! So far as external evidence goes we have no information concerning Cervantes from May 1601 to February 1603, but I suggest that he was in Seville during 1602. We know that Lope de Vega was constantly in Seville from 1600 to 1604, and we know that Cervantes wrote a complimentary sonnet for the edition of the *Dragontea* issued by Lope in 1602. The inference is that Cervantes and Lope were on friendly terms at this date, and it is therefore incredible that Cervantes had written —or even contemplated writing—the sharp attack on Lope in the forty-seventh chapter of *Don Quixote.* During the course of 1602 differences arose to separate the two men, and thenceforward Cervantes felt free to treat Lope as an ordinary mortal, an author who invited trenchant criticism. This would lead us to suppose that *Don Quixote* was not actually finished till just before Cervantes's departure to Valladolid at the beginning of 1603, and it would also explain how Lope de Vega became acquainted with the

contents of *Don Quixote* before it was actually published. Cervantes is pleasantly chatty and confidential in print respecting the books upon which he is at work; he is not likely to have been more reserved in private conversation with a friend. And it is intrinsically probable that at this difficult period of his life Cervantes may have made many confidences to Lope concerning his projects.

At first sight it may seem odd that we hear nothing of Cervantes's mingling in the literary circles of Seville; it may seem still more strange, if we take into consideration the fact that several of the poets whom he had praised in the *Galatea* were then living in Seville. But there is nothing strange about it, if we look at men and things from a contemporary point of view. The plain truth is that at this time Cervantes was a nobody in the eyes of educated people at Seville. His steps had been persistently dogged by failure. He had failed as a dramatist, and as a writer of romance; he had been discharged from the public service under a cloud, and his imprisonment would not recommend him to the Philistines. Highly respectable literary persons closed their doors to him, and in these circumstances Lope's companionship would be most welcome. From these small details we may fairly infer that *Don Quixote* was not finished till the very end of 1602, and that the final touches were not given till Cervantes went to Valladolid in 1603, a perfectly insignificant figure in the eyes of literary men and literary patrons. He was still nothing but a seedy elderly hack when *Don Quixote* was licensed in September 1604. The book stole into the market at the beginning of 1605, with no great expectation of success on the part of the publisher who had it printed in a commonplace, careless fashion, and left it to take its chance on his counter at the price of eight and a half *reales*. We all know the result.

From the outset *Don Quixote* was immensely popular, and from that day to this the author's reputation has steadily increased—till now he ranks as one of the great immortals. The history of literature shows no more enduring triumph.

Cervantes himself tells us that *Don Quixote* is, 'from beginning to end, an attack upon the books of chivalry,' and no doubt he means this assertion to be taken literally. But, as I have said elsewhere, the statement must be interpreted rationally in the light of other facts. It is quite true that books of chivalry had been a public pest, that grave scholars and theologians thundered against them, and that legislation was invoked to prevent their introduction into the blameless American colonies. The mystic Malón de Chaide, writing in 1588, declared that these extravagances were as dangerous as a knife in a madman's hand; but Malón de Chaide lived sequestered from the world, and was evidently not aware that public taste had changed since he was young. It is a significant fact that no romance of chivalry was printed at Madrid during the reign of Philip II., and the natural conclusion is that such publications were then popular only in country districts. The previous twenty years of Cervantes's life had been passed in the provinces, and one might be tempted to imagine that he was unaware of what was happening elsewhere. This would be an error: the fact that he mentions his own *Rinconete y Cortadillo* in *Don Quixote* proves that he knew there was a demand for picaresque stories, and that he was prepared to satisfy it. The probability is that Cervantes, who lived much in the past, had intended to write a short travesty of a chivalresque novel, and that his original intention remained present in his mind long after he had exceeded it in practice. If any one chooses to insist that Cervantes gave the romances of chivalry their death-blow, we are not

concerned to deny it; if he had done nothing more, it would have been an inglorious victory, for they were already at the last extremity: but in truth, though he himself may have been unconscious of it, in writing *Don Quixote* Cervantes signalised the triumph of the modern spirit over mediævalism.

He had set out impelled by the spirit of burlesque, and perhaps had met in his wanderings on the King's commission some quaint belated personage who seemed a survival from a picturesque, idealistic age, and who invited good-natured caricature. With some such intention, Cervantes began a tale, which, so far as he could foresee, would be no longer than some of his *Exemplary Novels* (of which one, at least, was already written); but the experiment was a new one, and the author himself was at the mercy of accidents. He saw little more than the possibilities of his central idea: a country gentleman who had become a monomaniac by incessant pondering over fabulous deeds, and who was led into ridiculous situations by attempting to imitate the imaginary exploits of his mythical heroes. Cervantes sets forth light-heartedly; pictures his gaunt hero arguing with Master Nicolás, the village barber, over the relative merits of Palmerín and Amadís; and finally presents him aflame with an enthusiasm which drives him to furbish up his great-grandfather's armour, to go out to right every kind of wrong, and to win everlasting renown (as well as the empire of Trebizond). Parodies, burlesque allusions, humorous parallels crowd upon the writer, and his pen flies trippingly along till he reaches the third chapter. At this point Cervantes perceives the subject broadening out, and the landlord accordingly impresses on Don Quixote the necessity of providing himself with a squire.

It is a momentous passage: there and then the image of Sancho Panza first flashed into the author's mind, but not with any definition of outline. Cervantes does not venture to introduce Sancho Panza in person till near the end of the seventh chapter, and he is visibly ill at ease over his new creation. It is quite plain that, at this stage, Cervantes knew very little about Sancho Panza, and his first remark is that the squire was an honest man (if any poor man can be called honest), 'but with very little sense in his pate.' This is not the Sancho who has survived: honesty is not the most pre-eminent quality of the squire, and if anybody thinks Sancho Panza a born fool he must have a high standard of ability. In the ninth chapter Cervantes goes out of his way to describe Sancho Panza as a long-legged man: obviously, up to this point, he had never seen the squire at close quarters, and was as yet not nearly so well acquainted with him as you and I are. He was soon to know him more intimately. Perceiving his mistake, he hustled the long-legged scarecrow out of sight, observed the real Sancho with minute fidelity, and created the most richly humorous character in modern literature. The only possible rival to Sancho Panza is Sir John Falstaff; but Falstaff is emphatically English, whereas Sancho Panza is a citizen of the world, stamped with the seal of universality.

It can scarcely be doubted that *Don Quixote* contains many allusions to contemporaries and contemporary events. We can catch the point of his jests at Lope de Vega's fondness for a classical reference, or at a geographical blunder made by the learned Mariana; but probably many an allusion of the same kind escapes us in Cervantes's pages. The same may be said of Shakespeare, and hence both Cervantes and Shakespeare have been much exposed to the attentions of

commentators. In a celebrated passage of *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* Oberon addresses Puck :—

> Thou rememberest
> Since once I sat upon a promontory,
> And heard a mermaid on a dolphin's back
> Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath
> That the rude sea grew civil at her song
> And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,
> To hear the sea-maid's music.

An ordinary reader would be content to admire the lines as they stand, but a commentator is an extraordinary reader, who feels compelled to justify his existence by identifying the mermaid with Mary Queen of Scots, the dolphin with her first husband the Dauphin of France, and the certain stars with Mary's English partisans. In precisely the same way Don Quixote has been identified with the Duke of Lerma, Sancho Panza with Pedro Franqueza, and the three ass-colts—promised by the knight to the squire as some compensation for the loss of Dapple—have been flatteringly recognised as the three Princes of Savoy, Philip, Victor Amadeus, and Emmanuel Philibert. These identifications seem quite as likely to be correct in the one case as in the other. We need not discuss them. But if *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* and *Don Quixote* were really intended as a couple of political pasquinades, they must be classed as complete failures: the idea that Cervantes and Shakespeare were a pair of party pamphleteers is a piece of grotesque perversity.

Apart from the matter of *Don Quixote,* the diversity of its manner is arresting. Even those who most admire the elaborate diction of the *Galatea* are compelled to admit its monotony. The variety of incident in *Don Quixote* corresponds to a variety of style which is a new thing in Spanish

literature. Still there are examples of deliberate imitation, not only in the travesties of the romances of chivalry, but in such passages as Don Quixote's famous declamation on the happier Age of Gold :—

> Happy the age, happy the time, to which the ancients gave the name of golden, not because in that fortunate age the gold so coveted in this our iron one was gained without labour, but because they that lived in it knew not the two words 'mine' and 'thine.' In that blessed age all things were in common ; to win the daily food no toil was needed from any man but to stretch out his hand and pluck it from the mighty oaks that stood there generously inviting him with their sweet ripe fruit. The crystal streams and rippling brooks yielded their clear and grateful waters in splendid profusion. The busy and wise bees set up their commonwealth in the clefts of the rocks and the hollows of the trees, offering without usance to every hand the abundant produce of their fragrant toil. . . . Fraud, deceit, or malice had not as yet tainted truth and sincerity. Justice held her own, untroubled and unassailed by the attempts of favour and interest, which so greatly damage, corrupt, and encompass her about. . . .

And so forth. It is a fine piece of embroidered rhetoric, which is fairly entitled to the place it holds in most anthologies of Spanish prose. But it is not specially characteristic of Cervantes: it is a brilliant passage introduced to prove that the writer could, if he chose, rival Antonio de Guevara as a virtuoso in what is thought the grand style. Nor is Cervantes himself in the points and conceits which abound in Marcela's address to Ambrosio and the assembled friends of the dead shepherd Chrysostom :—

> By that natural understanding which God has given me I know that everything beautiful attracts love, but I cannot see how, by reason of being loved, that which is loved for its beauty is bound to love that which loves it. . . . As there is an infinity of beautiful objects there must be an infinity of inclinations, and true love (so I have heard it said) is indivisible, and must be voluntary and

uncompelled. . . . I was born free, and that I might live in freedom I chose the solitude of the fields; in the trees of the mountains I find society, the clear waters of the brooks are my mirrors, and to the trees and waters I make known my thoughts and charms. I am a fire afar off, a sword laid aside. . . . Let him who calls me wild beast and basilisk leave me alone as a thing noxious and evil.

To the mind of an English reader, this passage recalls the recondite preciosity of Juliet:—

> Hath Romeo slain himself? say thou but 'I,'
> And that bare vowel, 'I,' shall poison more
> Than the death-darting eye of cockatrice:
> I am not I, if there be such an I,
> Or those eyes shut, that make thee answer 'I.'

These exhibitions of verbal ingenuity are a blemish in the early chapters of *Don Quixote* and in *Romeo and Juliet*. At this stage of their development both Cervantes and Shakespeare were struggling to disengage their genius from the clutch of contemporary affectation, and both succeeded. As *Don Quixote* progresses the parody of the books of chivalry becomes less insistent, the style grows more supple and adaptable, reaches a high level of restrained eloquence in the knight's speeches, is forcible and familiar in expressing the squire's artful simplicity, is invariably appropriate in the mouths of men differing so widely from each other as Vivaldo and the Barber, Ginés de Pasamonte and Cardenio, Don Fernando and the left-handed landlord, the Captive and the village priest. The dramatic fitness of the dialogue in *Don Quixote*, its intense life and speedy movement are striking innovations in the development of the Spanish novel, and give the book its abiding air of modernity. Cervantes had discovered the great secret that truth is a more essential element of artistic beauty than all the academic elegance in the world.

But the immediate triumph of *Don Quixote* was not due—or, at least, was not mainly due—to strictly artistic qualities. These make an irresistible appeal to us, who belong to a more analytic and sophisticated generation. To contemporary readers the charm of *Don Quixote* lay in its amalgamation of imaginative and realistic elements, in its accumulated episodes, in its infinite sympathy, and its pervasive humour. There was no question then as to whether *Don Quixote* was a well of symbolic doctrine. The canvas was crowded with types familiar to every one who had eyes to see his companions on the dusty highways of Spain. The wenches who served Don Quixote with stockfish and black bread; the lad Andrés, flayed in the grove of oaks by Juan Haldudo the Rich, of Quintanar; the goatherds seated round the fire on which the pot of salted goat was simmering; the three lively needle-makers from the Colt of Córdoba; the midnight procession escorting the dead body from Baeza to Segovia, and chanting dirges on the road; the dozen galley-slaves tramping on, strung together like beads on an iron chain—all these are observed and presented with masterly precision of detail. But the really triumphant creations of the book are, of course, Don Quixote and Sancho Panza—the impassioned idealist and the incarnation of gross common-sense. They were instantly accepted as great representative figures; the adventures of the fearless Manchegan madman and his timorous practical squire were speedily reprinted in the capital and the provinces; and within six months a writer in Valladolid assumed as a matter of course that his correspondent in the Portuguese Indies must have made the acquaintance of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza.

One of the most attractive characteristics of *Don Quixote* is its maturity; it may not have taken more than three or

four years to write, but it embodies the experience of a lifetime, and it breathes an air of urbanity and leisure. Cervantes was not an exceptionally rapid writer, and—if he thought about the matter at all—probably knew that masterpieces are seldom produced in a hurry. His great rival Lope de Vega easily surpassed him in brilliant facility: Cervantes's mind was weightier, less fleet but more precise. In the closing sentences of *Don Quixote* he had half promised a continuation, and no doubt it occupied his thoughts for many years. He had set himself a most formidable task—the task of equalling himself at his best—and he may well have shrunk from it, for he was risking his hard-won reputation on a doubtful hazard. He was in no haste to put his fortune to the touch. He sank into a pregnant silence, pondered over the technique of his great design, and, with the exception of an occasional sonnet, published nothing for eight years. At last in 1613 he issued his *Novelas Exemplares,* twelve short stories, the composition of which was spread over a long space of time. One of these, *Rinconete y Cortadillo,* is mentioned in *Don Quixote,* and must therefore date from 1602 or earlier; a companion story, the *Coloquio de los Perros,* is assigned to 1608; and the remaining ten are plausibly believed to have been written between these dates. The two tales just mentioned are the gems of the collection, but *La Gitanilla* and *El Celoso extremeño* are scarcely less striking, and certainly seven out of the dozen are models of realistic art. Cervantes was never troubled by mock-modesty, and ingenuously asserts that he was 'the first to attempt novels in the Castilian tongue, for the many which wander about in print in Spanish are all translated from foreign languages, while these are my own, neither imitated nor stolen.' There were earlier collections of stories (from one of which—Eslava's *Noches de Invierno*—

Shakespeare contrived to borrow the plot of *The Tempest*), but they are eclipsed by the *Novelas Exemplares*. These, in their turn, are overshadowed by *Don Quixote*, but they would suffice to make the reputation of any novelist by their fine invention and engaging fusion of truth with fantasy. The harshest of native critics yielded to the spell, and the *Novelas Exemplares* were skilfully exploited by John Fletcher and by Middleton and Rowley in England, as well as by Hardy in France.

Cervantes had now so unquestionably succeeded in prose that he was tempted to bid for fame as a poet. He mistrusted his own powers, and, as the event proved, with reason. His *Viage del Parnaso*, published in 1614, commemorated the most prominent versifiers of the day in a spirit of mingled appreciation and satirical criticism. It is very doubtful whether there have been so many great poets in the history of the world as Cervantes descried among his Spanish contemporaries, and his compliments are too effusive and too universal to be effective. A noble amateur, a potential patron, is lauded as extravagantly as though he were the equal of Lope or Góngora, and the occasional excursions into satire are mostly pointless. There are more wit, and pungency, and concentrated force in any two pages of *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* than in all the cantos of the *Viage del Parnaso* put together. It cannot be merely owing to temperamental differences that Byron succeeds where Cervantes fails. There are splenetic passages in the *Viage* relating to such writers as Bernardo de la Vega and the author of *La Pícara Justina*, but they miss their mark. The simple truth is—not that Cervantes was willing to wound and yet afraid to strike, but—that he had no complete mastery of his instrument.

His instinct was right; he moves uneasily in the fetters

of verse, and only becomes himself in the prose appendix to the *Viage* which (as the internal evidence discloses) was written side by side with the Second Part of *Don Quixote*. His true vehicle was prose, but he was reluctant to abide by the limitations of his genius, and while the sequel to *Don Quixote* was maturing, he produced a volume of plays containing eight formal full-dress dramas and eight sparkling interludes. By sympathy and by training Cervantes belonged to the older school of dramatists, and his attempts to rival Lope de Vega on Lope's own ground are mostly embarrassed and, in some cases, curiously maladroit; yet he displays a happy malicious humour in the less ambitious interludes, and, when he betakes himself to prose, he captivates by the spontaneous wit and nimble gaiety of his dialogue. These thumbnail sketches, like the kit-cats of the *Novelas Exemplares*, may be regarded as so many studies for the Second Part of *Don Quixote*, at which Cervantes was still working.

This tardy sequel, which followed the First Part at an interval of ten years, might never have seen the light but for the publication of Avellaneda's apocryphal *Don Quixote* with its blustering and malignant preface. Cervantes's gentle spirit survived unembittered by a heavy burden of trials and humiliations; but the proud humility with which (in the preface to his Second Part) he meets Avellaneda's attack shows how profoundly he resented it. It would have been well had he preserved this attitude in the text. He was taken by surprise and, goaded out of patience, flung his other work aside, and brought *Don Quixote* to a hurried close. Was Avellaneda's insolent intrusion a blessing in disguise, or was it disastrous in effect? It is true that but for Avellaneda we might have lost the true sequel as we have lost the Second Part of the *Galatea*, the *Semanas del*

Jardin, and the rest. It is no less true that, but for Avellaneda, the sequel might have been even better than it actually is. Cervantes had steadily refused to be hurried over his masterpiece, and, so long as he followed his own bent, his work is almost flawless. But Avellaneda suddenly forced him to quicken his step, and in the last chapters Cervantes manifestly writes in furious haste. His art suffers in consequence. His bland amenity deserts him; his eyes wander restlessly from Don Quixote and Sancho Panza to Avellaneda, whom he belabours out of season. He allows himself to be out-generalled, recasting his plan because his foe had stolen it—as though the plan and not the execution were the main essential! He advances, halts, and harks back, uncertain as to his object; he introduces irrelevant personalities and at least one cynical trait unworthy of him. Obviously he is anxious to have the book off his hands, so as to bring confusion on Avellaneda.

That these are blemishes it would be futile to deny; but how insignificant they are beside the positive qualities of the Second Part! Unlike some of his admirers, Cervantes was not above profiting by criticism. He tells us that objection had been taken to the intercalated stories of the First Part, and to some scenes of exuberant fun bordering on horse-play. These faults are avoided in the sequel, which broadens out till it assumes a truly epical grandeur. The development of the two central characters is at once more logical and more poetic; Don Quixote awakens less laughter, and more thought, while Sancho Panza's store of apophthegms and immemorial wisdom is more inexhaustible and apposite than ever. Lastly, the new personages, from the Duchess downwards to Doctor Pedro Recio de Agüero—the ill-omened physician of Barataria—are marvels of realistic portraiture. The presentation of the crazy knight and the droll squire

expands into a splendid pageant of society. And, as one reads the less elaborate passages, one acquires the conviction that the very dust of Cervantes's writings is gold. The Second Part of *Don Quixote* was the last of his works that he saw in print. His career was over, and it closed in splendour. His battle was fought and won, and he died, as befits a hero, with the trumpets of victory ringing in his ears.

His labyrinthine romance, *Los Trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda*, appeared in 1617. Even had this posthumous work been, as Cervantes half hoped, 'the best book of its kind,' it could scarcely have added to his glory. Though distinctly not the best book of its kind, the great name on its title-page procured it a respectful reception, and it was repeatedly reprinted within a short time of its publication. But it was soon lost in the vast shadow of *Don Quixote*: no one need feel guilty because he has not read it. The world, leaving scholars and professional critics to estimate the writer's indebtedness to Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius, has steadily refused to be interested in *Persiles y Sigismunda*; and in the long run the world delivers a just judgment. It is often led astray by gossip, by influence, by publishers' tricks, by authors who press their own wares on you with all the effrontery of a cheap-jack at a fair; but the world finds out the truth at last. An author's genius may be manifest in most or all of his works; but it is wont to be conspicuous in one above the rest. Shakespeare wrote *Hamlet*: one *Hamlet*. Cervantes wrote *Don Quixote*—two *Don Quixotes*: a feat unparalleled in the history of literature. The one is the foremost of dramatists, and the other the foremost of romancers: and it is to a single masterpiece that each owes the greater part of his transcendent fame.

CHAPTER VII

LOPE DE VEGA

Cervantes is unquestionably the most glorious figure in the annals of Spanish literature, but his very universality makes him less representative of his race. A far more typical local genius is his great rival Lope Félix de Vega Carpio who, for nearly half a century, reigned supreme on the stage at which Cervantes often cast longing eyes. My task would be much easier if I could feel sure that all of you were acquainted with the best and most recent biography of Lope which we owe to a distinguished American scholar, Professor Hugo Albert Rennert. I should then be able to indulge in the luxury of pure literary criticism. As it is, I must attempt to picture to you the prodigious personality of one who has enriched us with an immense library illustrating a new form of dramatic art.

Lope Félix de Vega Carpio, as he signed himself, was born at Madrid on November 25, 1562, just three hundred and forty-five years ago to-day.[1] There is some slight reason to think that his parents—Félix de Vega Carpio and Francisca Hernández Flores—came from the village of Vega in the valley of Carriedo at the foot of the Asturian hills. The historic name of Carpio does not accord well with the modest occupation of Lope's father who appears to have been a basket-maker; but every respectable Spanish family

[1] The present lecture was first delivered at the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, on November 25, 1907.

is more or less noble, and, though Lope was given to displaying a splendidly emblazoned escutcheon in some of his works—a foible which brought down on him the banter of Cervantes and of Góngora—he made no secret of his father's lowly station. Long afterwards, when Lope de Vega was in the noon of his popularity, Cervantes described him as a *monstruo de naturaleza*—a portent of nature—and, if we are to believe the legends that float down to us, he must have been a disconcerting wonder as a child—dictating verses before he could write, learning Latin when he was five. A few years later we hear of him as an accomplished dancer and fencer, as an adventurous little truant from the Theatine school at which he was educated, and as a juvenile dramatist. One of his plays belonging to this early period survives, but as a re-cast. It would have been interesting to read the piece in its original form: its title—*El Verdadero Amante* (The True Lover)—suggests some precocity in a boy of twelve. At an age when most lads are spinning tops Lope was already imagining dramatic situations and impassioned love-scenes.

He appears to have been page to Jerónimo Manrique de Lara, Bishop of Ávila, who helped him to complete his studies at the University of Alcalá de Henares. Lope never forgot a personal kindness, and in the *Dragontea* he acknowledges his debt to his benefactor whose intention was clearly excellent; but it is doubtful if Lope gained much by his stay at Alcalá except the horrid farrago of undigested learning which disfigures so much of his non-dramatic work, and is so rightly ridiculed by Cervantes. His undergraduate days were scarcely over when he made the acquaintance of Elena Osorio, daughter of a theatrical manager named Jerónimo Velázquez, whom he has celebrated as Filis in his early *romances*. He fought under

Santa Cruz at the Azores in 1582, and next year became secretary to the Marqués de las Navas. He is one of the many poets lauded by Cervantes in the *Canto de Calíope*, and, though Cervantes bestows his praise indiscriminatingly, it may be inferred that Lope enjoyed a certain reputation when the *Galatea* was published in 1585. He was then twenty-three, and was no doubt already a practised playwright: his acquaintance with Velázquez would probably open the theatres to him, and enable him to get a hearing on the stage. So far this intimacy was valuable to Lope, but it finally came near to wrecking his career. Elena Osorio was not apparently a model of constancy, and Lope was a passionate, jealous, headstrong youth with a sharp pen. On December 29, 1587, he was arrested at the theatre for libelling his fickle flame and her father, and on February 7, 1588, he was exiled from Madrid for eight years, and from Castile for two. The court seems to have anticipated that Lope might not think fit to obey its order, for it provided that if he returned to Madrid before the fixed limit of time he was to be sent to the galleys, and that if he entered Castile he was to be executed.

The judges evidently knew their man. He went through the form of retreating to Valencia, but he had no intention of hiding his talent under a bushel in the provinces. His next step was astounding in its insolence: he returned to Madrid, and thence eloped with Isabel de Urbina y Cortinas, daughter of a king-at-arms. The police were at once in hot pursuit, but failed to overtake the culprit. He parted from the lady, was married to her by proxy on May 10, 1588, and nineteen days later was out of range on the *San Juan*, one of the vessels of the Invincible Armada. Lope took part in the famous expedition of the 'sad Intelligencing Tyrant' when, as Milton puts it, 'the very maw

of Hell was ransacked, and made to give up her concealed destruction, ere she could vent it in that terrible and damned blast.' Returning from this disastrous adventure, during which he found time to write the greater part of *La Hermosura de Angélica*, an epic consisting of eleven thousand lines, Lope settled at Valencia, and joined the household of the fifth Duke of Alba. It was the custom of the time for a poor Spanish gentleman, who would have been disgraced by the adoption of a trade or business, to serve as secretary to some rich noble: the duties were various, indefinite and not always dignified, but they involved no social degradation. Lope's versatile talents were thus utilised in succession by the Marqués de Malpica and the Marqués de Sarriá, afterwards Conde de Lemos (the son-in-law of Lerma, and in later years the patron of Cervantes).

His introduction to aristocratic society enlarged Lope's sphere of observation: it did nothing to improve his morals, which were not naturally austere. During this period he was writing incessantly for the stage, and the Spanish stage was not then a school of asceticism. His wife died about the year 1595, and the last restraint was gone. Lope was straightway entangled in a series of scandalous amours. He was prosecuted for criminal conversation with Antonia Trillo de Armenta in 1596, and in 1597 began a love-affair with Micaela de Luján, the Camila Lucinda of his sonnets, and the mother of his brilliant children, Lope Félix del Carpio y Luján and Marcela, who inherited no small share of her father's improvising genius. It is impossible to palliate Lope's misconduct, and the persistent effort to keep it from public knowledge has damaged him more than the attacks of all his enemies; but it is fair to remember that he lived in the most corrupt circles of a corrupt age, that

he suffered such temptations as few men undergo, and that he repeatedly strove to extricate himself from the mesh of circumstance.

In 1598 he published his patriotic epic, the *Dragontea*, as well as a pastoral novel entitled the *Arcadia*, and in this same year he married Juana de Guardo, daughter of a wealthy but frugal man who had made a fortune by selling pork. Shakespeare was the son of a butcher, but the fact was not thrown in his teeth: Lope was less fortunate, and his second marriage was the subject of a derisive sonnet by Góngora. So far as can be judged, Lope's marriage with Juana de Guardo was one of affection, and the reflections cast upon him were absolutely unjust. But the stage had him in its grip, and he could not break with his past, try as he might. He strove without ceasing to make a reputation in other fields of literature: a poem on St. Isidore, the patron-saint of Madrid, the *Hermosura de Angélica* with a mass of supplementary sonnets, the prose romance entitled *El Peregrino en su patria*, the epic *Jerusalén conquistada* written in emulation of Tasso—these diverse works were produced in rapid succession between 1599 and 1609. Meanwhile Lope had been enrolled as a Familiar of the Holy Office, but the vague terror attaching to this sinister post did not prevent an attack being made on his life in 1611. He may have enlisted in the ranks of the Inquisition from mixed motives; yet we cannot doubt that he was passing through a pietistic phase at this time, for between 1609 and 1611 he joined three religious confraternities. This was no blind, no hypocritical attempt to affect a virtue which he had not. He was even too regardless of appearances all his life long.

The death of his son Carlos Félix was quickly followed by the death of his wife, and his devotional mood deepened.

He now made an irreparable mistake by entering holy orders. No man was less fitted to be a minister of religion, and his private correspondence discloses no sign of a religious spirit, or of anything resembling a religious vocation: on the contrary, it reveals him as frequenting loose company, and cracking unseemly jokes at a most solemn moment. The pendulum had already begun to swing before his ordination, and for some years afterwards he was prominent as an unscrupulous libertine. No one as successful as Lope could fail to make many enemies: he had now delivered himself into their hands, and assuredly they did not spare him. In the Preface to the Second Part of *Don Quixote* Cervantes, though he does not mention Lope de Vega by name, indulges in an unmistakable allusion to him as a Familiar of the Inquisition notorious for his 'virtuous occupation.' Yes! a 'virtuous occupation' which was an intolerable public scandal. From 1605 onwards Lope had been on intimate terms with the Duke of Sesa, and his correspondence with the Duke is his condemnation. But his conscience was not dead. Among his letters to Sesa many are stained with tears of shame and of remorse. They reveal him in every mood. He protests against being made the intermediary of the Duke's vulgar gallantries; he forms resolutions to amend, yet falls, and falls again.

In his fifty-fifth year he conceived an insane passion for Marta de Nevares Santoyo. On the details of this lamentable intrigue nothing need be said here. Once more Samson was in the hands of the Philistines. Led on by Góngora, they showed him no mercy, but he survived their onset. His plays were acted on every stage in Spain; the people who flocked to the theatre were spell-bound by his dramatic creations, his dexterity, grace and wit; his name was used as a synonym for matchless excellence; and he

strengthened his position with the more learned public by a mass of non-dramatic work. He seldom reaches such a height as in the *Pastores de Belén*—a perfect gem of devotion and of art—but the adaptability of his talent is amazing in prose and verse dealing with subjects as diverse as the triumphs of faith in Japan and the fate of Mary Queen of Scots. The short stories in the *Filomena* and *Circe* represent him at his weakest, but the *Dorotea*, a work that had lain by him for many years, is an absorbing fragment of autobiography which exhibits Lope as a master of graceful and colloquial diction.

In one of his agonies of repentance he exclaimed: 'A curse on all unhallowed love!' But the punishment of his own transgressions was long delayed. Marta, indeed, died blind and mad; but Lope still had his children, and, with all his faults, he was a fond and devoted father. We may well imagine that none of his own innumerable triumphs thrilled him with a more rapturous delight than the success of his son Lope Félix at the poetic jousts in honour of St. Isidore. Strengthened by the domestic happiness which he now enjoyed, Lope underwent a striking change. He wrote more copiously than ever for the stage, but yielded no longer to its temptations; his stormy passions lay behind him—part of a past which all were eager to forget. In 1628 he became chaplain to the congregation of St. Peter, and was a model of pious zeal. It was an astonishing metamorphosis, and there may have been an unconscious histrionic touch in Lope's rendering of a virtuous *rôle*. But the transformation was no mere pose. Lope was too frank to be a Pharisee, and too human to be a saint; but whatever he did, he did with all his might, and he became a hard-working priest, punctual in the discharge of his sacred office. Towards the close he occupied an unexampled pre-eminence.

Urban VIII. conferred on him a papal order; though not a favourite at court, he was invited by Olivares to exercise his ingenious fantasy for the entertainment of Philip IV., who was assuming the airs and graces of a patron of the drama. With the crowd Lope's popularity knew no bounds. Visitors hovered about to catch a glimpse of him as he threaded his way through the streets: his fellow-townsmen gloried in his glory. There is nothing in history comparable to his position.

> Blessings and prayers, a nobler retinue
> Than sceptred king or laurelled conqueror knows,
> Followed this wondrous potentate.

No man of letters has ever received such visible proofs of his own celebrity, and none has retained it so long. For something like half a century Lope had contrived to fascinate his countrymen, but even he began to grow old at last. Yet the change was not so much in him as in the rising generation.

The swelling tide of *culteranismo* was invading the stage; the fatal protection of Philip IV. was beginning to undermine the national theatre. Lope had always opposed the new fashion of preciosity, and he could not, or would not, supply the demand at court for a spectacular drama. One could scarcely expect him to help in demolishing the work of his lifetime. In his youth, and even in middle age, he looked down upon his plays as being almost outside the pale of literature. He lived long enough to revise his opinion, though perhaps to the last he would have refused to admit that his plays were worth all his epics put together. He lived long enough to revise his opinion, and a little too long for his happiness. His latest plays did not hit the public taste: his successor was already hailed in the person of the

courtly Calderón whom he himself had first praised. To his artistic mortifications were added poignant domestic sorrows. He had dissuaded his son, Lope Félix, from adopting literature as a profession: the youth joined the navy, went on a cruise to South America, and was there

> summoned to the deep,
> He, he and all his mates, to keep
> An incommunicable sleep.

The drowning of his son in 1634 was a grievous blow to Lope, but a more cruel stroke awaited him. The flight of his favourite daughter, Antonia Clara, from her home filled him with an unspeakable despair. He could endure no more. With the simple, confiding faith that never left him, he believed that his sins had brought upon him the vengeance of heaven, and he sought to make tardy atonement by the severest penance, lashing himself till the walls of his room were flecked with blood. But the end was at hand. On August 23, 1635, Lope wrote his last two poems, fell ill, and on August 27 his soul was required of him.

> The extravagant and erring spirit hies
> To his confine.

Headed by the Duke of Sesa, the vast funeral procession turned aside so as to pass before the convent of the Barefooted Trinitarians where Lope's gifted daughter Marcela had taken the vows in 1621. From the cloister window the nun watched the multitude on its way to the Church of St. Sebastian in the Calle de Atocha; there, to the mournful music of the *Dies irae*, Lope was interred beneath the high altar. His eloquent lips were silent; his untiring hand and his unquiet heart were still: his passionate pilgrimage was over. It might have been thought that all that was mortal of him was at peace for ever, and that the final resting-place

of one so famous could not be forgotten. But, as if to show that all is vanity, it was otherwise decreed by the mocking fates. Early in the nineteenth century it became necessary to remove Lope's coffin from the vault in which it lay, and no care was taken to ensure its subsequent identification. Hence he, whose renown once filled the world, now sleeps unrecognised amid the humble and the obscure.

It has been granted us to know Lope de Vega better than we know most of our contemporaries. He lived in the merciless light of publicity; his slightest slip was noted by vigilant eyes and rancorous pens; and he has himself recorded the weaknesses which any other man would have studiously concealed. Yet, gross as were his sins, his individual charm is irresistible. Ruiz de Alarcón taxed him with being envious, and from the huge mass of his confidential correspondence, a few detached phrases are picked out to support this charge. None of us is as frank as Lope; yet it seems highly probable that, if a selection were made from the private letters written in this city to-day and this selection were published in the newspapers to-morrow, a certain number of personal difficulties might follow. But let us test Ruiz de Alarcón's charge. Of whom should Lope be envious? Not of Ruiz de Alarcón himself, undoubtedly a remarkable dramatist, but never popular as Lope was. Not of Tirso de Molina, another great dramatist, but a personal friend of Lope's. Not of Cervantes, who had abandoned the stage long before he succeeded so greatly in romance. Not of Góngora, of whose poetic principles Lope disapproved, but to whom he paid sedulous court. Not of Calderón, who was nearly forty years younger than himself, and whom he first presented to the public. The accusation has no more solid base than a few choleric words dropped in haste.

The truth is that Lope is open to precisely the opposite charge of culpable complaisance. His genius, like that of Cervantes, was creative, not critical; his praise is fulsome, indiscriminating, and therefore ineffective. He was a most loyal friend, and to him all his geese are swans. His *Laurel de Apolo* is an exercise in adulation of no more critical value than Cervantes's *Canto de Calíope*. Famous writers, once in port, are inclined to 'nurse' their fame by conciliating their rivals. Lope's constant successes provided him with so many foes that it would have been folly to increase their number by attacking rising men. Like most other contemporaries he detested Ruiz de Alarcón; but Ruiz de Alarcón could take very good care of himself in a wrangle, and perhaps a man is not universally detested without some good reason. Apart from any question of tactics, Lope was naturally generous. There is a credible story that he dashed off the *Orfeo* to launch Pérez de Montalbán, who published it under his own name, and thus started on a prosperous, feverish career.

Lope was a sad sinner, but any attempt to represent him as an unamiable man is ridiculous. It is certain that he received large sums of money, and that he died poor: his purse was open to all comers. He lived frugally, loving nothing better than a romp with his children in the garden of his little house in the Calle de Francos. His pleasures and tastes were simple: careless remarks that drop from him reveal him to us. Typical Spaniard as he was, he disliked bull-fights, but he loved angling, and was a most enthusiastic gardener. He had, as he tells us in his pleasant way, half a dozen pictures and a few books; but the only extravagance which he allowed himself was the occasional purchase of flowers rare in Spain. He had a passion for the tulip—at that time a novelty in Europe—and, by dedicating to

Manoel Soeiro his *Luscinda perseguida* (an early play, not printed till 1621), he handsomely expressed his thanks for a present of choice Dutch bulbs. But, even if such positive testimony were wanting, we should confidently guess Lope's tastes from his poems, redolent of buds and blossoms, of gardens and of glades, of sweet perfumes and subtle aromas. In reading him, we think inevitably of *The Flower's Name*: you remember the lines, but I may be allowed to quote them:—

> This flower she stopped at, finger on lip,
> Stooped over, in doubt, as settling its claim;
> Till she gave me, with pride to make no slip,
> Its soft meandering Spanish name;
> What a name! was it love or praise?
> Speech half-asleep, or song half-awake?
> I must learn Spanish, one of these days,
> Only for that slow sweet name's sake.

It is very probable that Browning was not deeply read in the masterpieces of Spanish literature, and that he knew comparatively little of Lope; but in these verses we have (as it were) Lope rendered into English: they are Lope all over.

No competent judge questions Lope de Vega's right to rank as a great poet, but scarcely any great poet—except perhaps Wordsworth—is so unequal. The huge epics upon which he laboured so long, filing and polishing every line, are now forgotten by all but specialists, and (even among these elect) who can pretend that he reads the *Jerusalén conquistada* solely for pleasure? On the other hand, no unprejudiced critic denies the beauty of Lope's best sonnets and lyrics, nor the natural grace of his prose in the *Dorotea*, and in his unguarded correspondence. Had he written nothing else, he would be considered a charming poet, and wonderfully versatile man of letters. But these perform-

ances, astonishing as they are, may be regarded as the mere diversions of exuberant genius.

It is, of course, to his dramatic works that Lope de Vega owes his splendid pre-eminence in the history of literature. He was much more than a great dramatist: in a very real sense he was the founder of the national theatre in Spain. It cannot be denied that he had innumerable predecessors—men who employed the dramatic form with more or less skill; and he himself joined with Cervantes in acclaiming the metal-beater Lope de Rueda as the patriarch of the Spanish stage. But even the joint and several authority of Cervantes and Lope do not suffice in questions of literary history. No doubt Lope de Rueda is a figure of historical importance, and no doubt his actual achievement is considerable in its way. There is, however, nothing that can be called 'national' in Rueda's formal plays, which are mostly adaptations from the Italian, and the bluff hilarity of his clever interludes is primitive. The later practitioners in the Senecan drama are of less significance than Miguel Sánchez and than Juan de la Cueva, both of whom foreshadow the new developments which Lope de Vega was to introduce. So far as the drama is concerned Miguel Sánchez is represented to posterity by two plays only, and it is therefore difficult to estimate the extent of his influence on the Spanish drama. Cueva's innovating tendency is manifest in his choice of themes and his treatment of them: he strikes out a new line by selecting a representative historic subject, develops it regardless of the unities, and occasionally strikes the note of modernity by approximating to the comedy of manners—the cloak-and-sword play. Withal, Cueva is more remarkable as an intrepid explorer than as a finished craftsman, and he inevitably has the uncertain touch of an early experimenter.

Lope de Vega is on a higher plane as an executant, and is moreover a great original inventor. In its final form the Spanish theatre is his work, and whatever he may once have said of Lope de Rueda, he finally claimed the honour which undoubtedly belongs to him. Anticipating Tennyson, he pointedly remarks in the *Égloga á Claudio* that

> Most can raise the flowers now,
> For all have got the seed.

The passage is well worth quoting. 'Though I have departed from the rigidity of Terence, and though I am far from questioning the credit due to the three or four great geniuses who have guarded the infancy of the drama, yet to me'—he proudly continues—'to me the art of the *comedia* owes its beginnings. To whom, Claudio, do we owe so many pictures of love and jealousy, so many stirring passages of eloquence, so copious a supply of all the figures within the power of rhetoric to invent? The mass of to-day's productions is mere imitation of what art created yesterday. I it was who first struck the path and made it practicable so that all now use it easily. I it was who set the example now followed and copied in every direction.' 'I it was who first struck the path—I it was who first set the example.' It is a daring thing to say, but it can be maintained.

One of the chief difficulties in dealing with Lope, or in persuading others to deal with him, is his prodigious copiousness. But it is not insuperable. For our immediate purpose we may neglect his non-dramatic writings—in every sense a great load taken off, for they alone fill twenty-one quarto volumes. There remain his plays, and their number is astounding. We shall never know precisely how many plays Lope wrote, for only a small part of what was acted has survived, and his own statements are not altogether clear.

Roughly speaking, he seems to have written 220 plays up to the end of 1603, and from this date we can follow him as he gallops along: the total rises to 483 in 1609, 800 in 1618, 900 in 1620, 1070 in 1625, and 1500 in 1632. Four years afterwards Pérez de Montalbán published a volume of eulogies on the master by various hands—something like *Jonsonus Virbius*, to which Ford, Waller and others contributed posthumous panegyrics on Ben Jonson in 1638; and in this *Fama Póstuma* Pérez de Montalbán asserts that Lope wrote 1800 plays and more than 400 *autos* and *entremeses*. Consider a moment what these figures mean: they mean that Lope never wrote less than thirty-four plays a year, that he usually wrote fifty, that the yearly average rose to sixty as he grew older, and that in the last three years of his life it increased to over a hundred—say, two plays a week. Devout persons are sometimes prone to exaggerate the number of miracles performed by their favourite saint, and, if Pérez de Montalbán's statements were not corroborated by Lope, we might be inclined to suspect him of some such form of pious fraud. As it is, we have no ground for thinking that Pérez de Montalbán was guilty of any deliberate exaggeration: most probably he set down what he heard from Lope, as well as he remembered it. But perhaps Lope's calculations were wrong. If anything like 1800 of Lope's plays survived, nobody would have the courage to attack them. Most have perished, and we must judge Lope by the comparatively few that have escaped destruction—431 plays and 50 *autos*.

This may seem very much as though we were shown a few stones from the Coliseum, and invited on the strength of them to form an idea of Rome. It is no doubt but too likely that among the 1369 lost plays there may have been some real masterpieces (in literature the best does not always

survive); but it is inconceivable that only the failures have been saved, and, as the collected pieces range from a play written when Lope was twelve to another written shortly before his death, we have the privilege of observing every phase of his stupendous exploit. That is to say: we may have the privilege if we have the leisure. The student who sits down to the paltry remnant that has reached us will, if he reads Lope de Vega's plays without interruption for seven hours a day, be over six months before he reaches the end of his delightful task. I say it in all seriousness—a delightful task—but it would be idle to pretend that there are no tracts of barren ground. A large proportion of Lope's dramatic work is brilliant improvisation, and is not of stuff that endures; but there are veins of pure ore in his dross, and in moments of inspiration he ranks with the greatest dramatists in the world.

He has himself endeavoured to state his dramatic theory in the *Arte nuevo de hacer comedias en este tiempo*, and the contrast with his practice is amusing. He opens with a profession of faith in Aristotle's rules, of which he knew nothing beyond what he could gather from the pedantic schoolmen of the Renaissance, but goes on to confess that he disregards these sacred precepts because the public which pays cares nothing for them, and must be addressed in the foolish fashion that its folly demands. The only approach to a dramatic principle in the *Arte nuevo* is a matter-of-course approval of unity of action, the necessity of which has never been doubted by any playwright who knew his business. The rest of the unities go by the board, and the aspiring dramatist is solemnly exhorted to invent a clever plot, to maintain the interest steadily throughout, and to postpone the climax as long as possible so as to humour the public which loves to be kept on tenterhooks

till the last moment. 'Invent a clever plot and maintain the interest steadily throughout'—it is easily said, but how to do it? Lope proceeds to give his views as to the metres most appropriate for certain situations and emotions: laments are best expressed in *décimas*, the sonnet suits suspense, the *romance* (or, still better, the octave) is the vehicle of narrative, tercets are to be used in weighty passages, and *redondillas* in love-scenes. And Lope ends by admitting that only six of the 483 plays which he had composed up to 1609 were in accordance with the rules of art.

How familiar it sounds—this wailing over 'the rules of art'! Just so Ben Jonson lamented that Shakespeare 'wanted art'—that is, he paid no heed to the pseudo-Aristotelian precepts concerning dramatic composition. Nor did Lope: and it is precisely by neglecting to follow blind leaders of the blind, and by giving free play to their individual genius that Shakespeare and Lope de Vega have become immortal. Rules may serve for men of simple talent; but an original mind attains independence by intelligently breaking them, and thus arrives at inventing a new and living form of art. It is in this sense that we call Lope the founder of the Spanish theatre. His transforming touch is magical. Invested with the splendour of his imagination, the merest shred of fact, as in *La Estrella de Sevilla*, is converted into a romantic drama, living, natural, real, arresting as an experience suffered by oneself. And, with all Lope's rapidity of workmanship, his finest effects are not the result of rare and happy accident: they are deliberately and delicately calculated. We know from the testimony of Ricardo de Turia in the *Norte de la poesía española* that Lope was an assiduous frequenter of the theatre; that, long after his reputation was established, he would sit absorbed, listening to whatever play was being given; and that he

took careful note of every successful scene or situation. He was never above learning from others; but they could teach him little: he was the master of them all.

It is frequently alleged against him that his copiousness was an artistic blunder, and that he would have acted more wisely in the interest of his fame, if he had concentrated his magnificent powers on a smaller number of plays, and perfected them. In other words, he would have done more, if he had done less. This may be true; Virgil wrote ten lines a day, and they endure for ever: Lope wrote three thousand lines a day, and most of them have perished. But we must take genius as we find it, and be thankful to accept it on its own conditions. It is far from clear to me that Lope chose unwisely. He had not only a reputation to make, but a mission to fulfil. For the work that he was born to do—the creation of a national theatre—copiousness was an essential need. Continuous production, as Chorley puts it, is a vital requisite to 'the existence of the drama in its true form, as acted poetry.' This, however, is beyond the power of a few normal men of genius. Schiller and Goethe combined failed to create a national theatre at Weimar: no one but Lope could have succeeded in creating a national theatre at Madrid. At precisely the right moment Spain happily produced a most abnormal writer who could throw off admirable plays—many of them imperfect, but many of them masterpieces—in such profusion as twenty ordinary men of genius could not equal. Luzán declares that Lope so accustomed the Spanish public to constant novelty that no piece could be repeated after two performances. This is not quite exact. But assuming it to be true, you may say that Lope spoilt the public, as well as his own work. Well, that is as it may be: in our time, at all events, the plays that run for a thousand nights are not always the best.

Lope was equal to the demand made by exacting audiences, and he remained equal to it for an unexampled length of time. The most hostile critic must grant that Lope was the greatest inventor in the history of the drama. And he excelled in every kind. In tragedy he has given us such works as *Las Paces de los Reyes* and *La Fianza satisfecha*, and he would doubtless have given more had not the public rebelled against a too mournful presentation of life. Chorley, whom it is impossible to avoid quoting when Lope is under discussion, points to the significant fact that so great a tragedy as *La Estrella de Sevilla* is not included among Lope's dramatic works, nor in the two great miscellaneous collections of Spanish plays—the *Escogidas* and *Diferentes*, as they are called. It exists only as a *suelta*. Great in tragedy, Lope is greater—or, at least, is more frequently great—in contemporary comedy, in the realisation of character: *El perro del hortelano*, *La batalla del honor*, *Los melindres de Belisa*, *Las flores de Don Juan* and *La Esclava de su galán* are there to prove it. There are obvious flaws in Lope's pieces, but we can never feel quite sure that the flaws which irritate us most are not interpolations. He seems to have revised only the twelve volumes of his plays (Parts IX.-XX.) published between 1617 and 1625 inclusive, and two posthumous volumes; a large proportion of his work is so mishandled in the pirated editions that, as he avers, one line from his pen is smothered by a hundred lines from the pen of some unscrupulous actor or needy theatrical hanger-on.

The marvel is that such bungling has not been able to destroy the beauty of his conception altogether. Dramatic conception, and the faculty of distilling from no far-fetched situation all that it contains, are Lope's distinctive qualities. He is less successful in maintaining a constant level of verbal charm; he can caress the ear with an exquisite rhythmical

cadence, but he hears the impresario calling, sets spurs to Pegasus, and stumbles. The Nemesis of haste pursues him, and, as has often been remarked, some of his last acts are weak. *La batalla del honor* is a case in point: a splendid play spoiled by a weak ending. But this undeniable defect is not peculiar to Lope de Vega: it is noticeable in *Julius Cæsar,* the last act of which reveals Shakespeare pressed for time, and tacking his scenes rapidly together so as to put the play punctually in rehearsal. Let us be honest, and use the same scales and weights for every one: we shall find the greatest works by the greatest men frequently come short of absolute perfection at some point. Lope fails with the rest, and, if he fails oftener, that is because he writes more. Is it surprising that he should sometimes feel the strain upon him? He had not only to invent plots by the score, and create character by the hundred: he had also to satisfy a vigilant and fastidious public by the variety of his metrical craftsmanship, and in this respect he has neither equal nor second.

We must accept Lope as Heaven made him with his inevitable imperfections and his incomparable endowment. He has the Spanish desire to shine, to be conspicuous, to please, and he condescends to please at almost any cost. Yet he has an artistic conscience of his own, endangers his supremacy by flouting the tribe of *cultos,* and pours equal scorn on the pageant-plays—the *comedias del vulgo* which were so soon to become the fashion in court-circles. Lope needed no scene-painters to make good his deficiencies. In *Ay verdades que en amor,* he laughs at the pieces

> en que la carpintería
> suple concetos y trazas.

And well he might, for his alert presentation would convert

a barn into a palace. In the *comedia* which he invented—using *comedia* in much the same sense as Dante uses *commedia*—his scope is unlimited: he stages all ranks of human society from kings to rustic clowns, and is by turns tragic, serious, diverting, pathetic, or gay. He has the unique power of creating the daintiest heroines in the world—beautiful, appealing, tender and brave. He has the secret of communicating emotion, of inventing dialogue, always appropriate, and he is ever prompt to enliven it with a delicate humour, humane and debonair. He has not merely enriched Spain: in some degree not yet precisely known—for the history of comparative literature is in its infancy—he has contributed to almost every theatre in Europe.

Two or three illustrations must suffice. Rotrou, as the handbooks tell us, has borrowed four—perhaps five—plays from Lope: we may now say five and perhaps six, for in *Cosroès* Lope's *Las Mudanzas de la fortuna y sucesos de don Beltrán de Aragón* is combined with a Latin play by Louis Cellot. Every one remembers that Corneille borrowed *Don Sanche d'Aragon* and the *Suite du Menteur* from Lope. There are traces of Lope in Molière: in *Les Femmes savantes,* in *L'École des maris,* in *L'École des Femmes,* in *Le Médecin malgré lui*—and perhaps in *Tartufe.* And, even in the present incomplete state of our knowledge, it would be possible to draw up a long list of foreign debtors from Boisrobert and D'Ouville to Lesage. Of Lope's Spanish imitators this is not the time to speak. He did not found a school, but every Spanish dramatist of the best period marches under Lope's flag. There are still some who, in a spirit of chicane, would withhold from him the glory of being the architect of the Spanish theatre. So be it: but even they acknowledge that he found it brick, and left it marble.

CHAPTER VIII

CALDERÓN

For some time before Lope de Vega's death, it was evident that Calderón would succeed him as dictator of the stage. There was no serious competitor in sight. Tirso de Molina was becoming rusty; Vélez de Guevara and Ruiz de Alarcón, both on the wrong side of fifty when Lope died, had given the measure of what they could do, and Ruiz de Alarcón's art was too individual to be popular. No possible rival to Calderón was to be found among the younger men. His path lay smooth before him. He developed the national drama which Lope had created; he accentuated its characteristics, but introduced no radical innovation. He found the most difficult part of the work already done; he inherited a vast intellectual estate, and it is the general opinion that the patronage of Philip IV. helped him to exploit it profitably. This point may stand over for the moment. Here and now, it is enough to say that Calderón's career, so far as we can trace it, was one of uninterrupted success. Unfortunately, at present, we can only sketch his biography in outline. Within a year of his death, a short life of him was published by his admirer and editor, Juan de Vera Tassis y Villarroel; but, as Vera Tassis was thirty or forty years younger than Calderón, he naturally knew nothing of the dramatist's early circumstances. He begins badly with a blunder as to the date of Calderón's birth, shows himself untrustworthy in matters of fact, and indulges too freely in flatulent pane-

gyric. For the present we are condemned to make bricks with only a few wisps of straw; but if, as seems likely, Dr. Pérez Pastor is as fortunate with Calderón as he was with Cervantes, many a blank will be filled in before long.

Pedro Calderón de la Barca was born at Madrid on January 17, 1600. He became an orphan at an early age. His mother, who was of Flemish origin, died in 1610; his father, who was Secretary of the Council of the Treasury, seems to have offended his first wife's family by marrying again, was excluded from administering a chaplaincy in their gift, and died in 1615. Calderón was educated at the Jesuit college in Madrid, and later studied theology at the University of Salamanca with a view to holding the family living; but he gave up his idea of entering the Church, and took to literature. It has been said that he collaborated with Rojas Zorrilla and Belmonte in writing *El mejor amigo el muerto*, and he is specifically named as being the author of the Third Act. On the other hand, it is asserted that *El mejor amigo el muerto* was played on Christmas Eve, 1610, and, if this be so, we must abandon the ascription, for Calderón was then a boy of ten, while Rojas Zorrilla was only three years old. We may also hesitate to accept the unsupported statement of Vera Tassis that Calderón wrote *El Carro del Cielo* at the age of thirteen. Such 'fond legends of their infancy' accumulate round all great men. So far as can be gathered, Calderón first came before the public in 1620-22 at the literary *fêtes* held at Madrid in honour of St. Isidore, the patron saint of the city; and on the latter occasion Lope de Vega, who was usually florid in compliment, welcomed the new-comer as one who 'in his youth has gained the laurels which time, as a rule, only grants together with grey hair.' From the date of these first triumphs onward, Calderón never went back.

In 1621, four years before reaching his legal majority, he was granted letters-patent to administer his estate. Vera Tassis asserts that Calderón entered the army in 1625, and that he served in Milan and Flanders. If so, his service must have been very short, for he was at Madrid on September 11, 1625, and was still residing in that city on April 16, 1626. We find him again at Madrid, and in a scrape, in January 1629. His brother, Diego, had been stabbed by the actor Pedro de Villegas, who took sanctuary in the convent of the Trinitarian nuns; Calderón and his backers determined to seize the culprit, broke into the cloister, handled the nuns roughly, dragged off their veils, and used strong language to them. Such conduct is very unlike all that we know of Calderón; but this was the current version of his proceedings, and the rumour fluttered the dovecots of the devout. The alleged misdeeds of Calderón and his friends were denounced by the fashionable preacher, Hortensio Félix Paravicino, in a sermon delivered before Philip IV. on January 11, 1629. Calderón retaliated by making a sarcastic reference in *El Príncipe constante* to the popular ranter's habit of spouting unintelligible jargon:—

> Una oración se fragua
> fúnebre, que es un sermón de Berberia.
> Panegírico es que digo al agua,
> y en emponomio Horténsico me quejo.

But 'the king of preachers and the preacher of kings,' though ready enough to attack others, was not disposed to share this privilege: and he had Philip's ear. Calderón was arrested. As the jibe does not appear in the text of *El Príncipe constante*, possibly the author was released on the understanding that the offensive passage should be omitted from any printed edition; but it is just as likely

that Calderón, who had not a shade of rancour in his nature, voluntarily struck out the lines when the play was published after Paravicino's death, which occurred in 1633.

The escapade does not appear to have damaged him in any way, and his fame grew rapidly. The chronology of his plays is not yet determined, but it is certain that his activity at this period was remarkable. It seems probable that he collaborated with Pérez de Montalbán and Antonio Coello in *El Privilegio de las mugeres* during the visit of the Prince of Wales (afterwards Charles I.) and Buckingham to Madrid in 1623; *El Sitio de Bredá* was no doubt written soon after the surrender on June 8, 1625; *La Dama duende* is not later than 1629, *La Cena de Baltasar* was performed at Seville in 1632, in which year also *La Banda y la flor* was produced and *El Astrólogo fingido* was printed; *Amor, honor y poder* with *La Devoción de la Cruz* and *Un Castigo en tres venganzas* were issued in a pirated edition in 1634. Two years later Philip IV. was so enchanted with *Los tres mayores prodigios* (a poor piece given at the Buen Retiro) that he resolved to admit Calderón to the Order of Santiago. The official *pretensión* was granted on July 3, 1636, and the robe was bestowed on April 8, 1637. In 1636 twelve of Calderón's plays were issued by his brother José, who published twelve more in 1637. These two volumes raised the writer's reputation immensely, and well they might; for, besides *La Dama duende* and *La Devoción de la Cruz* (already mentioned), the first volume contained, amongst other plays, *La Vida es sueño, Casa con dos puertas, El Purgatorio de San Patricio, Peor está que estaba,* and *El Príncipe constante*; while the second volume, besides *El Astrólogo fingido* (already mentioned) contained *El Galán fantasma, El Médico de su honra, El Hombre pobre todo es trazas, A secreto agravio secreta venganza,* and the typical show-piece *El mayor encanto amor.*

Apart from the popular esteem which he thoroughly deserved, Calderón was evidently a special favourite with Olivares, who never stinted Philip in the matter of toys and amusements, and levied a sort of blackmail (for this purpose) on those whom he nominated to high office. Great preparations were made for a gorgeous production of *El mayor encanto amor* at the Buen Retiro in 1639. The Viceroy of Naples was induced to make arrangements for a lavish display by the ingenious stage-machinist, Cosme Lotti. A floating stage was provided lit up with three thousand lanterns; seated in gondolas, the King and his suite listened to the performance; and the evening closed with a banquet. These freakish shows were frequent. In February 1640 we hear of a stormy scene at a rehearsal, which ended in Calderón's being wounded. It is commonly said that he was at work on his *Certamen de amor y celos* when the Catalan revolt broke out in 1640, and that he finished it off hurriedly by a *tour de force* so as to be able to take the field. This is a picturesque tale, but, like most other picturesque tales, it seems to be somewhat doubtful. On May 28, 1640, before the rebellion began, Calderón enrolled himself in a troop of cuirassiers raised by Olivares, the Captain-General of the Spanish cavalry; and he did not actually take his place in the ranks till September 29. He proved an efficient soldier, was employed on a special mission, and received promotion. His health, as often happens with those destined to live long, was never robust, and forced him to resign on November 15, 1642. In 1645 he was granted a military pension of thirty *escudos* a month: it was not paid punctually, and he was more than once obliged to dun the Treasury for arrears.

He had now reached an age when men begin to lose their relatives and friends. In June 1645 his brother José was

killed in action at Camarasa; his brother Diego died at Madrid on November 20, 1647. Calderón's life was generally most correct, but he had his frailties, and his commerce with the stage exposed him to the occasions of sin. We do not know who was the mother of his son, Pedro José, but it may be assumed that she was an actress. She died about 1648-50, soon after the birth of the boy, who passed as Calderón's nephew. In 1648 Calderón was dangerously ill, and in December 1650 he alleged his increasing age and waning strength as a reason for quitting the King's service; he announced his intention of taking orders, and petitioned that his pension might, nevertheless, be continued. He had already been received as a Tertiary of St. Francis, and accepted the nomination to the living (founded by his grandmother in 1612) which he had thought of taking when he went to Salamanca University, some thirty years earlier. He was ordained in 1651, and seems to have been an exemplary priest.

An attempt was made to utilise his talents in a new direction. He was requested to write a chronicle of the Franciscan Tertiaries, undertook the task in 1651, but was compelled to abandon it in 1653 owing to his 'many occupations.' In a letter of this period addressed to the Patriarch of the Indies, Alfonso Pérez de Guzmán, Calderón declares that he had meant to cease writing for the stage when he took orders, and that he had yielded to the personal request of the Prime Minister, Luis de Haro, who had begged him to continue for the King's sake. In the same letter Calderón states that he had been censured for writing *autos*, that a favour conferred on him had been revoked owing to the objection of somebody unknown—*no sé quién*—that poetry was incompatible with the priesthood, and he ends by asking the Primate for a definite ruling: 'the thing is either wrong

or right; if right, let there be no more difficulties; and, if wrong, let no one order me to do it.' The drift of this alembicated letter is clear. The favour revoked was no doubt a chaplaincy at Toledo, and Calderón politely gave the Primate to understand that he should supply no more *autos* till he received an equivalent for the post of which he had been deprived. His hint was taken; he was appointed 'chaplain of the Reyes Nuevos' at Toledo in 1653, and his scruples were quieted. For the rest of his life he wrote most of the *autos* given at Madrid, and he eadily supplied show-pieces to be performed at the palace of the Buen Retiro. Some idea of the importance attached to these performances may be gathered from the *Avisos* of Barrionuevo, who tells us that—while the enemy was at the gate, while there was not a *real* in the Treasury, while the King was compelled to dine on eggs, while a capon 'stinking like dead dogs' was served to the Infanta, and while the court buffoon Manuelillo de Gante paid for the Queen's dessert,—there was always money to meet the bills of the stage-machinist Juan Antonio Forneli, to maintain a staff of from twenty-four to seventy actresses, and to import from Genoa hogsheads of costly jasmine-oil for stage-purposes.

Apart from the composition of *autos* and *comedias palaciegas*, Calderón's life was henceforth uneventful. His position in Spain was firmly established, but foreigners were sometimes recalcitrant. The French traveller Bertaut thought little of one of Calderón's plays which he saw in 1659, and thought even less of the author whom he visited later in the day:—'From his talk, I saw that he did not know much, though he is quite white-haired. We argued a little concerning the rules of the drama which they do not know at all, and which they make game of in that country.' This seems to

have been the average French view.[1] Chapelain, writing to Carrel de Sainte-Garde on April 29, 1662, says that he had read an abridgment of a play by Calderón:—'par où j'ay connu au moins que si les vers sont bons, son dessein est très mauvais, et sa conduite ridicule.' What else could a champion of the unities think?

Though a priest beyond reproach, Calderón was not left in peace by busybodies and heresy-hunters. His *auto* concerning the conversion of the eccentric Christina of Sweden was forbidden in 1656. Another *auto*, entitled *Las órdenes militares ó Pruebas del segundo Adán*, gave rise to no objection when acted before the King on June 8, 1662; but it was 'delated' to the Inquisition, the stage-copies were seized, and permission to perform it was refused. There can have been no heresy in this *auto*, for the prohibition was withdrawn nine years later. On February 18, 1663, Calderón became chaplain to Philip IV. (a post which carried with it no stipend), and in this same year he joined the Congregation of St. Peter, of which he was appointed Superior in 1666. He continued writing *comedias palaciegas* during the next reign: *Fieras afemina amor* and *La Estatua de Prometeo* were produced in honour of the Queen-Mother's birthday in 1675 and 1679 respectively; and *El segundo Escipión* was played on November 6, 1677, to commemorate the coming of age of Charles II. On August 24, 1679, an Order in Council

[1] Yet Quinault had already adapted *El galán fantasma* under the title of *Le Fantôme amoureux*, which is the source of Sir William Lower's *Amorous Fantasme* (1660), and there are other French imitations by Quinault, Scarron, and Thomas Corneille. Calderón was popular in Italy. As early as 1654, Cardinal Giulio Rospigliosi (afterwards Clement IX.) based on *No siempre lo peor es cierto* the libretto of *Dal male il bene*, which was set to music by Antonio Maria Abbatini and Marco Marazzoli. In 1656 *El mayor monstruo los celos* was arranged for the Italian stage by Giacinto Andrea Cicognini, who afterwards produced many other adaptations of Calderón's plays: see an interesting and learned article by Dr. Arturo Farinelli in *Cultura Española* (Madrid, February 1907), pp. 123-127.

was issued granting Calderón a *ración de cámara en especie* on account of his services, great age, and poverty; this is perplexing, for his will (made twenty-one months later) shows that he was very comfortably off.

There is a disquieting sentence in the preface to the fifth volume of Calderón's plays: Vera Tassis says that the dramatist tried to draw up a list of pieces falsely ascribed to him, and adds that 'his infirm condition did not allow of his forming a clear judgment about them.' What does Vera Tassis mean? Are we to understand that Calderón's intellect was slightly clouded towards the end, that he could not distinguish his own plays from those of other writers, and that perhaps he had become possessed with the notion (not uncommon in the aged) that he would die in want? Surely not. The financial statements of petitioners are often obscure. Calderón's memory may naturally have begun to fail when he was close on eighty, but in other respects his mind was vigorous. His *Hado y divisa de Leonido y Marfisa,* composed to celebrate the wedding of Charles II. with Marie-Louise de Bourbon, was given at the Buen Retiro on March 3, 1680; it was produced later for the general public at the Príncipe and Cruz *corrales,* and altogether was played twenty-one times—a great 'run' for those days. For over thirty years Calderón had been commissioned to write the *autos* for Madrid, and in 1681 he set to work as usual, but while engaged on *El Cordero de Isaías* and *La divina Filotea,* his strength failed him. He could only finish one of these two *autos,* and left the other to be completed by Melchor Fernández de León. He signed his will on May 20, took to his bed and added a codicil on May 23, bequeathing his manuscripts to Juan Mateo Lozano, the parish priest of St. Michael's at Madrid, who wrote the *Aprobación* to the volume of *Autos Sacra-*

mentales, alegóricos y historiales published in 1677. Calderón died on Whitsunday, May 25, 1681.

Almost all that we hear of him is eminently to his credit. Vera Tassis, who knew him intimately,—though perhaps less intimately than he implies,—dwells affectionately on Calderón's open-handed charity, his modesty and courtesy, his kindliness in speaking of contemporaries, his gentleness and patience towards envious calumniators. Calderón was a gentleman as well as a great man of letters—a rare combination. Like Lope de Vega, he was apparently not inclined to rank his plays as literature, and, unlike Lope, he does not seem to have changed his opinion on this point. In his letter to the Patriarch of the Indies he speaks slightingly of poetry as a foible pardonable enough in an idle courtier, but one which he regarded with contempt as soon as he took orders; and his disdain for his own work is commemorated in a ponderous epitaph, written by those who knew him best:—

CAMŒNIS OLIM DELICIARUM AMÆNISSIMUM FLUMEN
QUÆ SUMMO PLAUSU VIVENS SCRIPSIT,
MORIENS PRÆSCRIBENDO DESPEXIT.

He was never sufficiently interested in his secular plays to collect them, though he complained of being grossly misrepresented in the pirated editions which were current. According to Vera Tassis, he corrected *Las Armas de la hermosura* and *La Señora y la Criada* for the forty-sixth volume of the *Escogidas* printed in 1679; but he did no more towards protecting his reputation, though at the very end of his life he began an edition of the *autos*, the sacred subjects of these investing them in his eyes with more importance than could possibly attach to any secular drama.

It is by the merest accident that we have an authorised list of the titles of his secular plays. He drew it up, ten months before he died, at the urgent request of the Almirante-Duque de Veraguas (a descendant of Columbus), and it was included in the preface to the *Obelisco fúnebre, pirámide funesto,* published by Gaspar Agustín de Lara in 1784. Calderón's plays were printed by Vera Tassis who—though, as Lara is careful to inform us, he had not access to the original manuscripts in Lozano's keeping—was a fairly competent editor, as editors went in those days. It is not rash to say that to this happy hazard Calderón owes no small part of his international renown. For a long while, he was the only great Spanish dramatist whose works were readily accessible. Students who wished to read Lope de Vega—if there were any such—could not find an edition of his plays; Tirso de Molina was still further out of reach. Circumstances combined to concentrate attention on Calderón at the expense of his brethren. With the best will in the world, you cannot act authors whose plays are not available; but Calderón could be found at any bookseller's, and a few of his plays, together with two or three of Moreto's, were acted even during the latter half of the eighteenth century when French influence was dominant on the Spanish stage.

Calderón thus survived in Spain; and, owing to this survival, he came to be regarded by the evangelists of the Romantic movement abroad as the leading representative of the Spanish drama. Some of these depreciated Lope de Vega, with no more knowledge of him than they could gather from two or three plays picked up at random. German writers made themselves remarkable by their vehement dogmatism. Friedrich von Schlegel declared that, whereas Shakespeare had merely described the enigma of life, Calderón had solved it, thus proving himself to be, 'in all conditions and

circumstances, the most Christian, and therefore the most romantic, of dramatic poets.' August von Schlegel was as dithyrambic as his brother. Dismissing Lope's plays as containing interesting situations and 'inimitable jokes,'—Schlegel, *On Jokes*, is one of the many unwritten masterpieces, 'for which the whole world longs,'—he turns to Calderón, hails him as that 'blessed man,' and in a rhetorical transport proclaims him to be 'the last summit of romantic poetry.' Nobody writes in this vein now, and the loss is endurable. We are no longer stirred on reading that Calderón's 'tears reflect the view of heaven, like dewdrops on a flower in the sun': such imagery leaves us cold. But the rhetoric of the Schlegels, Tieck, and others was most effective at the time.

It was noised abroad that the Germans had discovered the supreme dramatic genius of the world; the great names of Goethe and Shelley were quoted as being worshippers of the new sun in the poetic heavens; the superstition spread to England, and would seem to have infected a group of brilliant young men at Cambridge—Trench, FitzGerald, and Tennyson. In *The Palace of Art*, as first published, Calderón was introduced with some unexpected companions:—

> Cervantes, the bright face of Calderon,
> Robed David touching holy strings,
> The Halicarnasseän, and alone,
> Alfred the flower of kings,
>
> Isaïah with fierce Ezekiel,
> Swarth Moses by the Coptic sea,
> Plato, Petrarca, Livy and Raphaël,
> And eastern Confutzee.

This motley company was dispersed later. In the revised version of *The Palace of Art* Calderón finds no place, and the omission causes no more surprise than the omission of

'eastern Confutzee.' He is admired as a splendid poet and a great dramatist, but we no longer see him, as Tennyson saw him in 1833, on a sublime and solitary pinnacle of glory—'a poetical Melchisedec, without spiritual father, without spiritual mother, with nothing round him to explain or account for the circumstances of his greatness.' As Trench says, there are no such appearances in literature, and Calderón has ceased to be a mystery or a miracle. Yet it was not unnatural that those who took the Schlegels for guides should see him in this light. The fact that the works of other Spanish dramatists were not easily obtainable necessarily gave an exaggerated idea of Calderón's originality and importance, for it was next to impossible to compare him with his rivals. We are now more favourably situated. We know—what our grandfathers could not know—that Friedrich von Schlegel was as wrong as wrong can be when he assured the world that Calderón was too rich to borrow. In literature no one is too rich to borrow, and Calderón's indebtedness to his predecessors is great. To give but one instance out of many: the Second Act of *Los Cabellos de Absalón* is taken bodily from the Third Act of Tirso de Molina's sombre and sinister tragedy, *La Venganza de Tamar.*

This was no offence against the prevailing code of morality in literary matters. Most Spanish dramatists of this period borrowed freely. Lope de Vega, indeed, had such wealth of invention that he was never tempted in this way: so, too, he seldom collaborated. So far from being a help, this division of labour was almost an impediment to him, for he could write a hundred lines in the time that it took him to consult his collaborator. But Lope was unique. Manuel de Guerra, in his celebrated *Aprobãción* to the *Verdadera Quinta Parte* of Calderón's plays, calls him a

monstruo de ingenio. The words recall the *monstruo de naturaleza,* the phrase applied by Cervantes to Lope, but there is a marked difference between the two men—a difference perhaps implied in the two expressions. Lope was possessed by an irresistible instinct which impelled him to constant, and often careless, creation; Calderón creates less lavishly, treats existing themes without scruple, and his recasts are sometimes completely successful. His devotees never allow us to forget, for instance, that in *El Alcalde de Zalamea* he has transformed one of Lope's dashing improvisations into a most powerful drama, and they cite as a parallel case the *Electra* of Euripides and the *Electra* of Sophocles. Just so, when Calderón receives a prize at the poetical jousts held at Madrid in 1620-22, the extreme Calderonians are reminded of 'the boy Sophocles dancing at the festival after the battle of Salamis.' Why drag in Sophocles? There are degrees. It is quite true that Calderón has made an admirable play out of Lope's sketch; but it is also true that the dramatic conception of *El Alcalde de Zalamea* is due to Lope, and not to Calderón.

Any other dramatist in Calderón's place would have been compelled to accept the conventions which Lope de Vega had imposed upon the Spanish stage—conventional presentations of loyalty and honour. Calderón devoted his magnificent gifts to elaborating these conventions into something like a code. His readiness in borrowing may be taken to mean that he was not, in the largest sense, an inventor, and the substance of his plays shows that he was rarely interested in the presentation of character. But he had the keenest theatrical sense, and once he is provided with a theme he can extract from it an intense dramatic interest. Moreover, he equals Lope in the cleverness with which he works up a complicated plot, and surpasses Lope in the

adroitness with which he employs the mechanical resources of the stage. In addition to these minor talents, he has the gift of impressive and ornate diction. It is a little unfortunate that many who read him in translations begin with *La Vida es sueño*, a fine symbolic play disfigured by the introduction of so incredible a character as Rosaura, declaiming gongoresque speeches altogether out of place. Calderón is liable to these momentary aberrations; yet, at his best, he is almost unsurpassable. Read, for example, the majestic speech of the Demon in *El Mágico prodigioso* which Trench very justifiably compares with Milton. The address to Cyprian loses next to nothing of its splendour in Shelley's version :—

> Chastised, I know
> The depth to which ambition falls; too mad
> Was the attempt, and yet more mad were now
> Repentance of the irrevocable deed :—
> Therefore I chose this ruin with the glory
> Of not to be subdued, before the shame
> Of reconciling me with him who reigns
> By coward cession.

It was once the fashion to praise Calderón chiefly as a philosophic dramatist, and it may be that to this philosophic quality his plays owe much of the vogue which they once enjoyed—and which, in a much less degree, they still enjoy —in Germany. As it happens, only two of Calderón's plays can be classified as philosophic—*La Vida es sueño* and *En esta vida todo es verdad y todo es mentira*—and, with respect to the latter, a question arises as to its originality. French writers have maintained that *En esta vida* is taken from Corneille's *Héraclius*, while Spaniards argue that Corneille's play is taken from Calderón's. On *a priori* grounds we should be tempted to admit the Spanish contention, for Corneille was—I do not wish to put the point too strongly

—more given to borrowing from Spain than to lending to contemporary Spanish playwrights. But there is the awkward fact that *Héraclius* dates from 1647, whereas *En esta vida* was not printed till 1664. This is not decisive, for we have seen that Calderón was not interested enough in his secular plays to print them, and we gather incidentally that *En esta vida* was being rehearsed at Madrid by Diego Osorio's company in February 1659. How much earlier it was written, we cannot say at present. The idea that Calderón borrowed from the French cannot be scouted as impossible, for Corneille's *Cid* was adapted by Diamante in 1658.[1] Perhaps both Calderón and Corneille drew upon Mira de Amescua's *Rueda de la fortuna*—a play which, as we know from Lope de Vega's letter belittling *Don Quixote*, was written in 1604, or earlier. But, whichever explanation we accept, Calderón's originality is compromised. With all respect to the eminent authorities who have debated this question of priority, we may be allowed to think that they have shown unnecessary heat over a rather unimportant matter. Neither *Héraclius* nor *En esta vida* is a masterpiece, and Sr. Menéndez y Pelayo holds that *En esta vida* contains only one striking situation—the tenth scene in the First Act, when both Heraclio and Leonido claim to be the sons of Mauricio, and Astolfo refuses to state which of the two is mistaken :—

> Que es uno dellos diré ;
> pero cuál es dellos, no.

This amounts to saying that Calderón's play is no great marvel, for very few serious pieces are ever produced on the stage unless the first act is good. The hastiest of impre-

[1] If Calderón be really the author of the *sainete* entitled *El Labrador Gentilhombre* printed at the end of *Hado y divisa de Leonido y Marfisa*, he had evidently read Molière's *Bourgeois gentilhomme*. But the authorship of this *sainete* is uncertain.

sarios, the laziest dramatic censor—even they read as far as the end of the First Act. But, if we give up *En esta vida,* Calderón is deprived of half his title to rank as a 'philosophic' dramatist. We still have *La Vida es sueño,* a noble and (apparently) original play disfigured, as I have said, by verbal affectations, such as the opening couplet on the

> Hipogrifo[1] violento
> que corriste pareja con el viento,

which is almost invariably quoted against the author. So, too, whenever *La Vida es sueño* is mentioned, we are almost invariably told that, as though to prove that life is indeed a dream, 'a Queen of Sweden expired in the theatre of Stockholm during its performance.' This picturesque story does not seem to be true, and, at any rate, it adds no more to the interest of the play than the verbal blemishes take from it. The weak spot in the piece is the sudden collapse of Segismundo when sent back to the dungeon, but otherwise the conception is admirable in dignity and force.

Many critics find these qualities in Calderón's tragedies, and I perceive them in *Amar después de la muerte.* The scene in which Garcés describes how he murdered Doña Clara, and is interrupted by Don Álvaro with—

> ¿ Fue
> Como ésta la puñalada ?—

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[1] Most Spaniards who ridicule Calderón for using *hipogrifo* accentuate the word wrongly in speech and writing. *Hipógrifo* is a mistake; the word is not a *palabra esdrújula,* as may be seen from Lope de Vega's use of it in *La Gatomaquia* (silva vii.):—

> Que vemos en Orlando el hipogrifo,
> monstruo compuesto de caballo y grifo.

Calderón himself gives it as a *palabra llana* in his *auto* entitled *La lepra de Constantino.* For other examples, see Rufino José Cuervo, *Apuntaciones críticas sobre el lenguaje bogotano con frecuente referencia al de los países de Hispano-América.* Quinta edición (Paris, 1907), pp. 11-12.

is, as Sr. Menéndez y Pelayo says, worthy of Shakespeare; and it long ago reminded Trench of the scene in *Cymbeline* where Iachimo's confession—

> Whereupon—
> Methinks, I see him now—

is interrupted by Posthumus with—

> Ay, so thou dost,
> Italian fiend!

But, for some reason, *Amar después de la muerte* is not among the most celebrated of Calderón's tragic plays, and it is certainly not the most typical—not nearly so typical as *Á secreto agravio secreta venganza*, and two or three others. Here the note of genuine passion is almost always faint, and is sometimes wanting altogether. Othello murders Desdemona in a divine despair because he believes her guilty, and because he loves her: Calderón's jealous heroes, with the exception of the Tetrarch in *El Mayor monstruo los celos*, commit murder as a social duty. In *Á secreto agravio secreta venganza* Don Lope de Almeida, with his interminable soliloquies, ceases to be human, and becomes the incarnation of (what we now think to be) a silly conventional code of honour. Doña Leonor in this play is not so completely innocent in thought as Doña Mencía in *El Médico de su honra*; but Don Lope de Almeida murders the one, and Don Gutierre Alfonso Solís murders the other, with the same cold-blooded deliberation shown in *El Pintor de su deshonra* by Don Juan de Roca, who has some apparent justification for killing Doña Serafina.

With all the skill spent on their construction, these tragedies do not move us deeply, and they would fail to interest, if it were not that they embody the accepted ideas concerning the point of honour in Spain during the seven-

teenth century. It is most difficult for us to see things as a Spaniard then saw them. He began by assuming that any personal insult could only be washed away by the blood of the offender: a man is killed in fair fight in a duel, but the survivors of the slain must slay the slayer. Modern Europe, as Chorley wrote more than half a century ago, has nothing like this, 'except the terrible Corsican *vendetta*.' And, as stated by the same great authority—the greatest we have ever had on all relating to the Spanish stage—'beneath the unbounded devotion which the Castilian professed to the sex, lay a conviction of their absolute and universal frailty.' In Spanish eyes 'no woman's purity,' Chorley continues, 'was safe but in absolute seclusion from men:—guilt was implied and honour lost in every case where the risk of either was possible,—nay, even had accident thrown into a temptation a lady whose innocence was proved to her master, the appearance of crime to the world's eye must be washed out in her blood.' It has often been said that, in Calderón, 'honour' is what destiny is in the Greek drama.

This code of honour seems to many of us immoral nonsense, and it is difficult to suppose that Friedrich von Schlegel had *El Médico de su honra* in mind when he declared Calderón to be 'in all conditions and circumstances the most Christian . . . of dramatic poets.' It is hard to imagine anything more unchristian than the conduct of Don Gutierre Alfonso Solís which is held up for approval; but no doubt it was approved by contemporary playgoers. In this glorification of punctilio Calderón is thoroughly representative. He reproduces the conventional ideas which obtained for a certain time, in certain complicated conditions, in a certain latitude and longitude. This local verisimilitude, which contributed to his immediate success, now constitutes a limitation. The dramatist may be

true to life, in so far as he presents temporary aspects of it with fidelity; he is not true to universal nature, and therefore he makes no permanent appeal. This, or something like it, has been said a thousand times, and, I think, with good reason. Still, it leaves Calderón where he was as the spokesman of his age.

He is no less representative in his *comedias de capa y espada* —his plays of intrigue, which are really dramatic presentations of ordinary contemporary manners in the vein of high comedy. Opponents of the Spanish national theatre have charged him with inventing this typical form of dramatic art, as though it were a misdemeanour. There is no sense in belittling so characteristic a *genre*, and no ground for ascribing the invention of cloak-and-sword plays to Calderón. They were being written by Lope de Vega before Calderón was born, and were still further elaborated by Tirso de Molina. Lope's redundant genius adapts itself easily enough to the narrow bounds of the *comedia de capa y espada*, but he instinctively prefers a more spacious field. The very artificiality of such plays must have been an attraction to Calderón. All plays of this class are much alike. There are always a gallant and a lady engaged in a love-affair; a grim father or petulant brother, who may be a loose liver but is a rigid moralist where his own women-folk are concerned; a *gracioso* or buffoon, who comes on the scene when things begin to look dangerous. The material is the same in all cases; the playwright's dexterity is shown in the variety of his arrangement, the ingenious novelty of the plot, the polite mirth of the dialogue, the apt introduction of episodes which revive or diversify the interest, and prolong it by leaving the personages at cross-purposes till the last moment. Calderón is a master of all the devices that help to make a good play of this kind. Character-drawing

would be almost out of place, and, as character-drawing is Calderón's weak point, one of his chief difficulties is removed. He is free to concentrate his skill on polishing witty 'points,' on contriving striking situations, and preparing deft surprises at which he himself smiles good-humouredly. The whole play is based on an idealistic convention, and Calderón displays a startling cleverness in conforming to the complicated rules of the game.

He fails at the point where the convention is weakest. His *graciosos* or drolls are too laboriously comic to be amusing. He has abundant wit, and the *discreteo* of the lover and the lady is often brilliant. But there is some foundation for the taunt that he is interested only in fine gentlemen and *précieuses*. He had not lived in courts and palaces for nothing. The racy, rough humour of the illiterate clearly repelled his fastidious temper, and the fun of his *graciosos* is unreal. This is what might be anticipated. It takes one cast in the mould of Shakespeare, or Cervantes, or Lope, to sympathise with all conditions of men. Calderón fails in another point, and the failure is certainly very strange in a man of his meticulous refinement and social opportunities. With few exceptions, the women in his most famous plays are unattractive. A Spanish critic puts it strongly when he calls the women on Calderón's stage *hombrunas* or mannish. No foreign critic would be brave enough to say this, but it is not an unfair description. A man's idea of a womanly woman is often quaint: he sees her as something between a white-robed angel and a perfect imbecile. That is not Calderón's way. Doña Mencía in *El Médico de su honra* and Doña Leonor in *A secreto agravio secreta venganza* are distinctly formidable, and, even in the cloak-and-sword plays, there is something masculine in the academic preciosity of the

lively heroines. It is manifest that Calderón has no deep knowledge of feminine character, that his interest in it is assumed for stage purposes, and that his chief preoccupation is—not to portray idiosyncrasies, nor even types of womanhood, but—to make physical beauty the theme of his eloquent, poetic flights. In this he succeeds admirably, though his flights are apt to be too long. You probably know Suppico de Moraes' story of Calderón's acting before Philip IV. in an improvisation at the Buen Retiro, the poet taking the part of Adam, and Vélez de Guevara that of God the Father. Once started, Calderón declaimed and declaimed, and, when he came to an end at last, Vélez de Guevara took up the dialogue with the remark: 'I repent me of creating so garrulous an Adam!' Most probably the tale is an invention,[1] but it is not without point, for Philip and the rest would have been a match for Job, if they had never been bored with the favourite's tirades. Like most Spaniards, Calderón is too copious; but in lyrical splendour he is unsurpassed by any Spanish poet, and is surpassed by few poets in any language. Had he added more frequent touches of nature to his idealised presentations, he would rank with the greatest dramatists in the world.

As it is, he ranks only just below the greatest, and in one dramatic form peculiar to Spain, he is, by common consent, supreme. Everybody quotes Shelley's phrase about 'the light and odour of the starry *autos*'; but scarcely anybody reads the *autos*, and I rather doubt if Shelley read them. It is suggested that he took an *auto* to mean an ordinary play, and this seems likely enough, for that is what an *auto* did mean at one time. But an *auto sacramental* in Calderón's time was a one-act piece (performed in the open air on

[1] Pedro Jozé Suppico de Moraes, *Collecção politica de apothegmas, ou ditos agudos, e sentenciosos* (Coimbra, 1761), Parte I., pp. 337-338.

the Feast of Corpus Christi) in which the Eucharistic mystery was presented symbolically. We can imagine this being done successfully two or three times, but not oftener. The difficulty was extreme, and as a new *auto*—usually two new *autos*—had to be provided every year, authors had recourse to the strangest devices. There are *autos* in which Christ is symbolised by Charlemagne (surrounded by his twelve peers), or by Jason, or Ulysses; there are *autos* in which an attempt is made to evade the conditions by introducing saints famous for their devotion to the Eucharist. Such pieces are illegitimate: they are not really *autos sacramentales*, but *comedias devotas*.

Calderón treats the subject within the rigid limits of the convention,—as a doctrinal abstraction,—and he treats it in a spirit of the most reverential art. He does not fail even in *El Valle de la Zarzuela*, where he hampers himself by connecting the theme with one of Philip IV.'s hunting-expeditions. He tells us with a certain dignified pride that his *autos* had been played before the King and Council for more than thirty years, and he apologises for occasional repetitions by saying that these are not so noticeable at a distance of twenty years as when they occur between the covers of a book. But no apology is needed. Calderón dealt with his abstruse theme more than seventy times—not always with equal success, but never quite unsuccessfully, and never repeating himself unduly. This is surely one of the most dexterous exploits in literature, and Calderón appears to have done it with consummate ease. His reflective genius, steeped in dogma, was far more interested in the mysteries of faith than in the passions of humanity, far more interested in devout symbolism than in realistic characterisation. His figures are pale abstractions? Yes: but he compels us to accept them by virtue of his sublime

allegory, his majestic vision of the world invisible, and the adorable loveliness of his lyrism.

His *autos* endured for over a century. As late as 1760 *El Cubo de la Almudena* was played on Corpus Christi at the Teatro del Príncipe in Madrid, while *La Semilla y la cizaña* was played at the Teatro de la Cruz. The *autos* were obviously dying; they were no longer given in the open air before the King and Court, and the devout multitude; they were shorn of their pomp, and played indoors before an indifferent audience amid irreverent remarks. On one occasion, according to Clavijo, after the actor who played the part of Satan had declaimed a passage effectively, an admirer in the pit raised a cheer for the devil:—*¡ Viva el demonio!* There is evidence to prove that the public performance of the *autos sacramentales* was often the occasion of disorderly and scandalous scenes. Clavijo has been blamed for his articles in *El Pensador matritense,* advocating their suppression, and perhaps his motives were not so pure as he pretends. Yet he was certainly right in suggesting that the day for *autos* was over. They were prohibited on June 9, 1765. But they must soon have died in any case, for the supply had ceased, and later writers like Antonio de Zamora were mostly content to retouch Calderón's *autos.*[1] Zamora and Bancés Candamo were not the men to keep up the high tradition, and the attitude of the public had completely changed.

The fact that his *autos sacramentales* are little read in Spain, and are scarcely read at all out of Spain, is most unfortunate for Calderón, for his noblest achievement remains comparatively unknown. His reputation abroad

[1] Zamora's arrangement of Calderón's *auto* entitled *El pleito matrimonial* was played at the Príncipe theatre in Madrid on the Feast of Corpus Christi, 1762.

is based on his secular plays which represent but one side of his delightful genius, and that side is not his strongest. The works of Lope de Vega and of Tirso de Molina have become available once more, and this circumstance has necessarily affected the critical estimate of Calderón as a dramatist. Paul Verlaine, indeed, persisted in placing him above Shakespeare, but Verlaine was the last of the Old Guard. Calderón is relatively less important than he was thought to be before Chorley's famous campaign in *The Athenæum*: all now agree with Chorley that Calderón is inferior to Lope de Vega in creative faculty and humour, and inferior to Tirso de Molina in depth and variety of conception. But, when every deduction is made, Calderón is still one of the most stately figures in Spanish literature. Naturally a great lyric poet, his deliberate art won him a pre-eminent position among poets who used the dramatic form, and he lives as the typical representative of the devout, gallant, loyal, artificial society in which he moved. He is not, as once was thought, the synthesis of the Spanish genius, but no one incarnates more completely one aspect of that genius. Who illustrates better than the author of *El Príncipe constante* what Heiberg wrote of Spanish poets generally just ninety years ago:—'Habet itaque poësis hispanica animam gothicam in corpore romano, quod orientali vestimento induitur; verum in intimo corde christiana fides regnat, et per omnes se venas diffundit'? The same thought recurs in *The Nightingale in the Study*:—

A bird is singing in my brain
And bubbling o'er with mingled fancies,
Gay, tragic, rapt, right heart of Spain
Fed with the sap of old romances.

I ask no ampler skies than those
His magic music rears above me,

No falser friends, no truer foes,—
And does not Doña Clara love me?

Cloaked shapes, a twanging of guitars,
A rush of feet, and rapiers clashing,
Then silence deep with breathless stars,
And overhead a white hand flashing.

O music of all moods and climes,
Vengeful, forgiving, sensuous, saintly,
Where still, between the Christian chimes,
The Moorish cymbal tinkles faintly!

O life borne lightly in the hand,
For friend or foe with grace Castilian!
O valley safe in Fancy's land,
Not tramped to mud yet by the million!

Bird of to-day, thy songs are stale
To his, my singer of all weathers,
My Calderon, my nightingale,
My Arab soul in Spanish feathers!

To most of us, as to Lowell, the Spain of romance is the Spain revealed to us by Calderón. Though not the greatest of Spanish authors, nor even the greatest of Spanish dramatists, he is perhaps the happiest in temperament, the most brilliant in colouring. He gives us a magnificent pageant in which the pride of patriotism and the charm of gallantry are blended with the dignity of art and 'the fair humanities of old religion.' And unquestionably he has imposed his enchanting vision upon the world.

CHAPTER IX

THE DRAMATIC SCHOOL OF CALDERÓN

Lope de Vega, as I have tried to persuade you in a previous lecture, may fairly be regarded as the real founder of the national theatre in Spain. His victory was complete, and the old-fashioned Senecan drama was everywhere supplanted by the *comedia nueva* in which the 'unities' were neglected. Playwrights who could no longer get their pieces produced took great pains to prove that Lope ought to have failed, and dwelt upon the enormity of his anachronisms and geographical blunders. These groans of the defeated are always with us. Just as the pedant clamours for Shakespeare's head on a charger, because he chose to place a seaport in Bohemia, so Andrés Rey de Artieda, in his *Discursos, epístolas y epigramas,* published under the pseudonym of Artemidoro in 1605, is indignant at the triumph of ignorant incapacity:—

> Galeras vi una vez ir por el yermo,
> y correr seis caballos por la posta,
> de la isla del Gozo hasta Palermo.
> Poner dentro Vizcaya á Famagosta,
> y junto de los Alpes, Persia y Media,
> y Alemaña pintar, larga y angosta.
> Como estas cosas representa Heredia,
> á pedimiento de un amigo suyo,
> que en seis horas compone una comedia.

The meaning of this little outburst is quite simple: it means that Rey de Artieda was no longer popular at

Valencia, and that he and his fellows had had to make way on the Valencian stage for such followers of Lope de Vega as Francisco Tárrega, Gaspar de Aguilar, Guillén de Castro and Miguel Beneyto—all members of the Valencian *Academia de los nocturnos,* in which they were known respectively as 'Miedo,' 'Sombra,' 'Secreto' and 'Sosiego.'

A very similar denunciation of the new school was published by a much greater writer in the same year. Cervantes ridiculed the *comedia nueva* as a pack of nonsense without either head or tail—*conocidos disparates y cosas que no llevan pies ni cabeza*; yet he dolefully admits that 'the public hears them with pleasure, and esteems and approves them as good, though they are far from being anything of the sort.' The long diatribe put into the mouth of the canon in *Don Quixote* is the plaint of a beaten man who calls for a literary dictatorship, or some such desperate remedy, to save him from Lope and the revolution. Whether Cervantes changed his views on the merits of the question, or whether he merely bowed to circumstances, we cannot say. But he tacitly recanted in *El Rufián dichoso,* and even defended the new methods as improvements on the old :—

> Los tiempos mudan las cosas
> y perfeccionan las artes . . .
> Muy poco importa al oyente
> que yo en un punto me pase
> desde Alemania á Guinea,
> sin del teatro mudarme.
> El pensamiento es ligero,
> bien pueden acompañarme
> con él, do quiera que fuere,
> sin perderme, ni cansarse.

Passing from theory to practice, Cervantes appeared as a very unsuccessful imitator of Lope de Vega in *La Casa de*

los Celos ó las Selvas de Ardenio. The dictatorship for which he asked had come, but the dictator was Lope.

All Spanish dramatists of this period came under Lope's influence. He was even more supreme in Madrid than in Valencia, and other provincial centres. He set the fashion to men as considerable as Vélez de Guevara, Mira de Amescua, Tirso de Molina, and Calderón himself. Lope and Ruiz de Alarcón were at daggers drawn; but these were personal quarrels, and, original as was Alarcón's talent, the torch of Lope flickers over some of his best scenes. These men were much more than imitators. If Lope ever had a devoted follower, it was the unfortunate Juan Pérez de Montalbán; but even Pérez de Montalbán was not a servile imitator, and it was precisely his effort to develop originality that affected his reason. Lope's influence was general; he founded a national drama, but he founded nothing which we can justly call a school—a word which implies a certain exclusiveness and rigidity of doctrine foreign to Lope's nature. So far was he from founding a school that, towards the end of his life, he was voted rather antiquated, and this view was still more widely held during Calderón's supremacy. In the autograph of Lope's unpublished play, *Quien más no puede*, there is a note by Cristóbal Gómez, who writes—'This is a very good play, but not suitable for these times, though suitable in the past; for it contains many *endechas* and many things which would not be endured nowadays; the plot is good, and should be versified in the prevailing fashion.' This is dated April 19, 1669, less than forty years after Lope's death; he was beginning to be forgotten by almost all, except the playwrights who stole from him.

Calderón, on the other hand, did found a school. For one thing, his conventionality and mannerisms are infinitely

easier to imitate than Lope's broad effects. 'Spanish Comedy,' as Mr. George Meredith says, 'is generally in sharp outline, as of skeletons; in quick movement, as of marionettes. The Comedy might be performed by a troup of the *corps de ballet*; and in the recollection of the reading it resolves to an animated shuffle of feet.' Whatever we may think of this as a judgment on Spanish comedy as a whole, it describes fairly enough the dramatic work produced by many of Calderón's followers: with them, if not with their master, art degenerates into artifice—a clever trick. Calderón himself seems to have grown tired of the praises lavished on his ingenuity. He knew perfectly that neatness of construction was not the best part of his work, and, in *No hay burlas con el amor*, he laughs at himself and his more uncritical admirers:—

> ¿Es comedia de don Pedro
> Calderón, donde ha de haber
> por fuerza amante escondido,
> ó rebozada muger?

Unfortunately these stage devices—these concealed lovers, these muffled mistresses, these houses with two doors, these walls with invisible cupboards, these compromising letters wrongly addressed—were precisely what appealed to the unthinking section of the public, and they were also the characteristics most easily reproduced by imitators in search of a short cut to success. Other circumstances combined to make Calderón the head of a dramatic school. Except in invention and in brilliant facility the dramatists of Lope's time were not greatly inferior to the master. In certain qualities Tirso de Molina and Ruiz de Alarcón are superior to him: Tirso in force and in malicious humour, Ruiz de Alarcón in depth and in artistic finish. There is no such approach to equality between Calderón and the

men of his group. No strikingly original dramatic genius appeared during his long life, extending over three literary generations. He himself had made no new departure, no radical innovation; he took over the dramatic form as Lope had left it, and, by focussing its common traits, he established a series of conventions—a conventional conception of loyalty, honour, love and jealousy. The stars in their courses fought for him. He was equally popular at court and with the multitude, pleasing the upper rabble by his glittering intrigue and dexterous *discreteo*, pleasing the lower rabble by his melodramatic incident and the mechanical humour of his *graciosos*, pleasing both high and low by his lofty Catholicism and passionate devotion to the throne. Though not in any real sense more Spanish than Lope de Vega, Calderón seems to be more intensely national, for he reduced the *españolismo* of his age to a formula. Out of the plays of Lope and of Tirso, he evolved a hard-and-fast method of dramatic presentation. He came at a time when it was impossible to do more. All that could be done by those who came after him was to emphasise the convention which, by dint of constant repetition, he had converted into something like an imperative theory.

It follows, as the night the day, that the monotony which has been remarked in Calderón's plays is still more pronounced in those of his followers. The incidents vary, but the conception of passion and of social obligation is identical. The dramatists of Calderón's school adopt his method of presenting the conventional emotions of loyalty, devotion, and punctilio as to the point of honour; and, having enclosed themselves within these narrow bounds, they are almost necessarily driven to exaggeration. This tendency is found in so powerful a writer as Francisco de Rojas Zorrilla, of whom we know scarcely anything except that he was born

at Toledo in 1607, and that he was on friendly terms with both the devout José de Valdivielso and the waggish Jerónimo de Cáncer—who in his *Vejamen,* written in 1649, gives a comical picture of the dignified dramatist tearing along in an undignified hurry. In 1644 Rojas Zorrilla was proposed as a candidate for the Order of Santiago, but the nomination was objected to on the ground that he was of mixed Moorish and Jewish descent, and that some of his ancestors two or three generations earlier had been weavers and carpenters. These allegations were evidently not proved, for Rojas Zorrilla became a Knight of the Order of Santiago on October 19, 1645. The autograph of *La Ascensión del Cristo, nuestro bien* states that this piece was written when the author was fifty-five: this brings us down to 1662. Rojas Zorrilla then disappears: the date of his death is unknown. The first volume of his plays was published in 1640, the second in 1645. In the preface to the second volume he makes the same complaint as Lope de Vega and Calderón—namely, that plays were fathered upon him with which he had nothing to do—and he promises a third volume which, however, was not issued.

It has been denied that Rojas Zorrilla belongs to Calderón's school, and no doubt he was much more than an obsequious pupil. Yet he was clearly affiliated to the school. He belonged to the same social class as Calderón; he was seven years younger, and must have begun writing for the stage just when it became evident that Calderón was destined to succeed Lope de Vega in popular esteem; and, moreover, he actually collaborated later with Calderón in *El Monstruo de la fortuna.* It is hard to believe that Calderón, at the height of his reputation, would condescend to collaborate with a junior whose ideals differed from his own. No such difference existed: as might be expected from a disciple,

Rojas Zorrilla is rather more Calderonian than Calderón. Out of Spain he is usually mentioned as the author of *La Traición busca el castigo*, the source of Vanbrugh's *False Friend* and Lesage's *Le Traître puni*; but, if he had written nothing better than *La Traición busca el castigo*, he would not rise above the rank and file of Spanish playwrights. His most remarkable work is *García del Castañar*, a famous piece not included in either volume of the plays issued by Rojas Zorrilla himself. The natural explanation would be that it was written after 1645, and this is possible. Yet it cannot be confidently assumed. As we have already seen, *La Estrella de Sevilla* is not contained in the collections of Lope's plays. Plays were not included or omitted solely on their merits, but for other reasons: because they were likely to please 'star' actors, or because they had failed to please a particular audience.

The story of *García del Castañar* is so typical that it is worth telling. García is the son of a noble who had been compromised in the political plots which were frequent during the regency of the Infante Don Juan Manuel. He takes refuge at El Castañar near Toledo, lives there as a farmer, marries Blanca de la Cerda (who, though unaware of the fact, is related to the royal house), and looks forward to the time when, through the influence of his friend the Count de Orgaz, he may be recalled. News reaches him that an expedition is being fitted out against the Moors, and he subscribes so largely that his contribution attracts the attention of Alfonso XI., who makes inquiries about him. The Count de Orgaz takes this opportunity to commend García to the King's favour, but dwells on his proud and solitary nature which unfits him for a courtier's life. Alfonso XI. determines to visit García in disguise. Orgaz informs García of the King's intention and adds that, as

Alfonso XI. habitually wears the red ribbon of a knightly order, there will be no difficulty in distinguishing him from the members of his suite. Four visitors duly arrive at El Castañar, passing themselves off as hunters who have lost their way, and, as one of the four is decorated as described by Orgaz, García takes him to be the King. In reality he is Don Mendo, a courtier of loose morals. Unrecognised, Alfonso XI. converses with García, telling him of the King's satisfaction with his gift, and holding out to him the prospect of a brilliant career at court: García, however, is not tempted, and declares his intention of remaining in happy obscurity. The hunting-party leaves Castañar; but Don Mendo, enamoured of Doña Blanca, returns next day under the impression that García will be absent. Entering the house by stealth, he is discovered by García who, believing him to be the King, spares his life. Don Mendo does not suspect García's misapprehension, and retires, supposing that the rustic was awed by the sight of a noble. But the stain on García's honour can only be washed away with blood. In default of the real culprit, he resolves to kill his blameless wife, who takes flight, and is placed by Orgaz under the protection of the Queen. García is summoned to court, is presented to the King, perceives that the foiled seducer was not his sovereign, slays Don Mendo in the royal antechamber, returns to the presence with his dagger dripping blood, and, after defending his action as the only course open to a man of honour, closes his eloquent tirade by declaring that, even if it should cost him his life, he can allow no one—save his anointed King—to insult him with impunity:—

> Que esto soy, y éste es mi agravio,
> éste el ofensor injusto,
> éste el brazo que le ha muerto,
> éste divida el verdugo;

pero en tanto que mi cuello
esté en mis hombros robusto,
no he de permitir me agravie
del Rey abajo, ninguno.

Del Rey abajo, ninguno—'None, under the rank of King' —is the alternative title of *García del Castañar,* and these four energetic words sum up the exaltation of monarchical sentiment which is the leading motive of the play. Buckle, writing of Spain, says in his sweeping way that 'whatever the King came in contact with, was in some degree hallowed by his touch,' and that 'no one might marry a mistress whom he had deserted.' This is not quite accurate. We know that, at the very time of which we are speaking, the notorious 'Calderona'—the mother of Don Juan de Austria —married an actor named Tomás Rojas, and that she returned to her husband and the stage after her *liaison* with Philip IV. was ended. Still, it is true that reverence for the person of the sovereign was a real and common sentiment among Spaniards. Clarendon speaks of 'their submissive reverence to their princes being a vital part of their religion,' and records the horrified amazement of Olivares on observing Buckingham's familiarity with the Prince of Wales—'a crime monstrous to the Spaniard.' This reverential feeling, like every other emotion, found dramatic expression in the work of Lope de Vega. It is the leading theme in *La Estrella de Sevilla,* and Lope has even been accused of almost blasphemous adulation by those who only know this celebrated play in the popular recast made at the end of the eighteenth century by Cándido María Trigueros, and entitled *Sancho Ortiz de las Roelas.* The charge is based on a well-known passage :—

¡ La espada sacastes vos,
y al Rey quisisteis herir

¿El Rey no pudo mentir?
No, que es imagen de Dios.

But it is not Lope who says that the King is the image of God. These lines are interpolated by Trigueros, who felt no particular loyalty to anybody, and overdid his part when he endeavoured to put himself in Lope's position. What was an occasional motive in Lope's work reappears frequently and in a more emphatic form in Calderón's work. The sentiment of loyalty is expressed with something like fanaticism in *La Banda y la flor* and in *Guárdate del agua mansa*; and with something unpleasantly like profanity in the *auto sacramental* entitled *El Indulto general* where the lamentable Charles II. seems to be placed almost on the same level as the Saviour.

Rojas Zorrilla's glorification of the King in *García del Castañar* is inspired by Calderón's example, and he follows the chief in other ways less defensible. Splendid as Calderón's diction often is, it lapses into gongorism too easily. Rojas Zorrilla's natural mode of expression is direct and energetic; his dialogue is both natural and brilliant in *Don Diego de Noche* and *Lo que son mugeres*; he knew the difference between a good style and a bad one, and he pauses now and then to satirise Góngora and the *cultos*. But he must be in the fashion, and as Calderón has dabbled in *culteranismo*, he will do the same. And he bursts into gongorism with all the crude exaggeration of one who is deliberately sinning against the light. His little flings at the Gongorists are few and feeble as in *Sin honra no hay amistad*, where he describes the darkened sky:—

Está hecho un Góngora el cielo,
más obscuro que su libro.

But a few pages later, in the second volume of his collected

plays, he rivals the most extravagant of Góngora's imitators when he describes the composition and dissolution of the horse in *Los Encantos de Medea*:—

> Era de tres elementos
> compuesto el bruto gallardo,
> de fuego, de nieve, y aire; . . .
> fuese el aire á los palacios
> de su región, salió el fuego,
> nieve, aire y fuego, quedando
> agua lo que antes fue nieve,
> lo que fue antes fuego, rayo;
> exhalación lo que aire,
> nada lo que fue caballo.

This is what Ben Jonson would call 'clotted nonsense,' and you find the same bombast in another play of Rojas Zorrilla's—and an excellent play it is—entitled *No hay ser padre, siendo Rey*, upon which Rotrou's *Venceslas* is based. In such faults of taste Rojas Zorrilla leaves Calderón far behind. You have seen him at his strongest in *García del Castañar*: you will find him at his weakest—and it is execrably bad—if you turn to the thirty-second volume of the *Comedias Escogidas*, and read *La Vida en el atahud*. Here St. Boniface goes to Tarsus and is decapitated: in the ordinary course, you expect the curtain to fall at this point. But Rojas Zorrilla prepares a surprise for you. The trunk of the saint is presented on the stage, the martyr holding his head in his hand; and the head addresses Milene and Aglaes in such a startling way that both become Christians. It seems very likely that, if Ludovico Enio had not been converted by the sight of the skeleton in Calderón's *Purgatorio de San Patricio*, Milene and Aglaes would not have been confronted with the severed head, talking, in *La Vida en el atahud*.

Like Calderón, though in a lesser degree, Rojas Zorrilla

is not above utilising the material provided by his predecessors: even in *García del Castañar* there are reminiscences of Lope de Vega's *Peribáñez y el Comendador de Ocaña*, of Lope's *El Villano en su rincón*, of Vélez de Guevara's *La Luna de la Sierra*, and of Tirso de Molina's *El Celoso prudente*. But, if he has all Calderón's defects, he has many of his great qualities. Few cloak-and-sword plays are better worth reading than *Donde hay agravios, no hay celos*, or than *Sin honra no hay amistad*, or than *No hay amigo para amigo* (the source of Lesage's *Le Point d'honneur*). Rojas Zorrilla has perhaps less verbal wit than Calderón, but he has much more humour, and he shows it in such pieces as *Entre bobos anda el juego*, from which the younger Corneille took his *Don Bertrand de Cigarral*, and Scarron his *Dom Japhet d'Arménie*. Scarron, indeed, picked up a frugal living on the crumbs which fell from Rojas Zorrilla's table. He took his *Jodelet ou le Maître valet* from *Donde hay agravios no hay celos*, and his *Écolier de Salamanque* from *Obligados y ofendidos*, a piece which also supplied the younger Corneille and Boisrobert respectively with *Les Illustres Ennemis* and *Les Généreux Ennemis*. But observe that, in Rojas Zorrilla's case as in Calderón's, the foreign adapters use only the light comedies. The rapturous monarchical sentiment of *García del Castañar* no doubt seemed too hysterical for the court of Louis XIV., and hence the author's most striking play remained unknown in Northern Europe. You may say that he forced the note, as Spaniards often do, and that he has no one but himself to thank. Perhaps: Rojas Zorrilla adopts a convention, and every convention tends to become more and more unreal. Possibly the first man who signed himself somebody else's obedient servant meant what he wrote: you and I mean nothing by it. But conventions are convenient,

and, though nobody can have had much respect for Philip IV. towards the end of his reign, the monarchical sentiment was latent in the people. Moreover, the scene of *García del Castañar* is laid in the early part of the fourteenth century. When all is said, *García del Castañar* has an air of—what we may call—local truth, a nobility of conception, and a concentrated eloquence which go to make it a play in a thousand.

Nothing is easier to forget than a play which has little more than cleverness to recommend it, and many of the pieces written by Calderón's followers are clever to the last degree of tiresomeness. There is cleverness of a kind in *El Conde de Sex ó Dar la vida por su dama*, and, if there were any solid basis for the ascription of it to Philip IV., we should have to say that it was a very creditable performance for a king. But then kings in modern times have not greatly distinguished themselves in literature. You remember Boileau's remark to Louis XIV.:—'Votre Majesté peut tout ce qu'Elle veut faire: Elle a voulu faire de mauvais vers; Elle y a réussi.' However, if *El Conde de Sex* would do credit to a royal amateur, it would be a rather mediocre performance for a professional playwright like Antonio Coello, to whom also it is attributed. Coello was already known as a promising dramatist when Pérez de Montalbán wrote *Para todos* in 1632, but we can scarcely say that his early promise was fulfilled. The air of courts does not encourage independence, and Coello, apparently distrustful of his powers, collaborated in several pieces with fellow-courtiers like Calderón, Vélez de Guevara and Rojas Zorrilla—notably with the two latter in *También la afrenta es veneno*, which dramatises the malodorous story of Leonor Telles (wife of Fernando I. of Portugal) and her first husband, João Lourenço da Cunha, *el de los cuernos de oro*.

Shortly before he died in 1652 Coello had his reward by being made a member of the royal household, but he would now be forgotten were it not that he is said to be the real author of *Los Empeños de seis horas* (*Lo que pasa en una noche*), which is printed in the eighth volume of the *Escogidas* as a play of Calderón's. Assuming that the ascription of it to Coello is correct, he becomes of some interest to us in England, for the play was adapted by Samuel Tuke under the title of *The Adventures of Five Hours*. This piece of Tuke's made a great hit in London when it was printed in 1662; four years later Samuel Pepys confided to his diary that 'when all is done, it is the best play that ever I read in all my life,' and when he saw it acted a few days afterwards, he effusively declared that *Othello* seemed 'a mean thing' beside it. There is a tendency to make the Spanish author—for Tuke adds little of his own—pay for Pepys's extravagance. *Los Empeños de seis horas* is nothing like a masterpiece, but it is a capital light comedy—neatly constructed, witty, brisk and entertaining. It is, indeed, so much better than anything else which bears Coello's name that there is some hesitation to believe he wrote it. However, he has the combined authority of Barrera and Schaeffer in his favour, though neither of these oracles gives any reason to support the ascription.

As a writer of high comedy Coello had many rivals in Spain—men slightly his seniors, like Antonio Hurtado de Mendoza, who became known in England through Fanshawe's translations, and who must also have been known in France, since his play *El Marido hace mujer* was laid under contribution by Molière in *L'École des maris*; men like his contemporary Álvaro Cubillo de Aragón, whose *El Señor de Buenas Noches* was turned to account by the younger Corneille in *La Comtesse d'Orgueil*; men like his junior,

Fernando de Zárate y Castronovo, the author of *La Presumida y la hermosa,* in which Molière found a hint for *Les Femmes savantes.* But the most successful writer in this vein was Agustín Moreto y Cavaña, who was born in 1618, just as Calderón was leaving Salamanca University to seek his fortune as a dramatist at Madrid. To judge by his more characteristic plays we should guess Moreto to have been the happiest of men, and the gayest; but late in life he gave an opening to writers of 'hypothetical biography,' and they took it. For instance, when he was over forty he became devout, took orders, and made a will directing that he should be buried in the Pradillo del Carmen at Toledo—a place which has been identified as the burial-ground of criminals who had been executed. This identification gave rise to the theory that he must have had some ghastly crime upon his conscience, and, as particulars are generally forthcoming in such cases, some charitable persons leapt to the conclusion that Moreto was the undetected assassin of Lope's friend, Baltasar Elisio de Medinilla.

One is always reluctant to spoil a good story, but luck is against me this afternoon. A few moments ago I mentioned the 'Calderona,' and stated that she returned to the stage after her rupture with Philip IV.: that destroys the usual picturesque story of her throwing herself in an agony of abjection at Philip's feet, and going straightway into a convent to do penance for the rest of her life. I am afraid that I must also destroy this agreeable legend about Moreto's being a murderer. It is unfortunate for Moreto, for many who have no strong taste for literature are often induced to take interest in a man of letters if he can be proved guilty of some crime: they will spell out a little Old French because they have heard that Villon was a cracksman. Well, we must tell the truth, and take the conse-

quences. The identification of the Pradillo del Carmen turns out to be wrong. The Pradillo del Carmen was the cemetery used for those who died in the hospital to which Moreto was chaplain, and to which he bequeathed his fortune: the Pradillo del Carmen has nothing to do with the burial-place for criminals, though it lies close by. Moreto evidently wished not to be separated in death from the poor people amongst whom he had laboured; but, as it happens, his directions were not carried out, for when he died on December 28, 1669, he was buried in the church of St. John the Baptist at Toledo. And this is not the only weak point in the story. Medinilla was killed in 1620 when Moreto was two years old, and few assassins, however precocious, begin operations at that tender age. Lastly, it would seem that Medinilla was perhaps not murdered at all, but was killed in fair fight by Jerónimo de Andrade y Rivadeneyra. These prosaic facts compel me to present Moreto to you—not as an interesting cut-throat, not as a morose and sinister murderer, crushed by his dreadful secret, but—as a man of the most genial disposition, noble character, and singularly virtuous life.

He was all this, and he was also one of the cleverest craftsmen who ever worked for the Spanish stage. But nature does not shower all her gifts on any one man, and she was niggardly to Moreto in the matter of invention. He made no secret of the fact that he took whatever he wanted from his predecessors. His friend Jerónimo de Cáncer represents him as saying:—

> Que estoy minando imagina
> cuando tu de mí te quejas;
> que en estas comedias viejas
> he hallado una brava mina.

He did, indeed, find a *brava mina* in the old plays, and

especially in Lope de Vega's. From Lope's *El Gran Duque de Moscovia* he takes *El Príncipe perseguido*; from Lope's *El Prodigio de Etiopia* he takes *La Adúltera penitente*; from Lope's *El Testimonio vengado* he takes *Como se vengan los nobles*; from Lope's *Las Pobrezas de Rinaldo* he takes *El Mejor Par de los doce*; from Lope's *De cuando acá nos vino . . .* he takes *De fuera vendrá quien de casa nos echará*; from Lope's delightful play *El Mayor imposible* he constructs the still more delightful *No puede ser*, from which John Crowne, at the suggestion of Charles II., took his *Sir Courtly Nice, or, It cannot be*, and from which Ludvig Holberg, the celebrated Danish dramatist, took his *Jean de France*. Moreto was scarcely less indebted to Lope's contemporaries than to Lope himself. From Vélez de Guevara's *El Capitán prodigioso y Príncipe de Transilvania* he took *El Príncipe prodigioso*; from Guillén de Castro's *Las Maravillas de Babilonia* he took *El bruto de Babilonia*, and from Castro's *Los hermanos enemigos* he took *Hasta el fin nadie es dichoso*; from Tirso de Molina's *La Villana de Vallecas* he took *La ocasión hace al ladrón*; and from a novel of Castillo Solórzano's he took the entire plot of *La Confusión de un jardín*. This is a fairly long list, but it does not include all Moreto's debts.

He has his failures, of course. *El ricohombre de Alcalá* looks anæmic beside its original, *El Infanzón de Illescas*, which is ascribed to both Lope and Tirso; and *Caer para levantar* is a wooden arrangement of Mira de Amescua's striking play, *El Esclavo del demonio*. If you can filch to no better purpose than this, then decidedly honesty is the best policy. Perhaps Moreto came to this conclusion himself in some passing mood, and it must have been at some such hour that he wrote *El Parecido en la Corte* and *Trampa adelante*, both abounding in individual humour. But such moods are not frequent with him. If you choose to say

that Moreto was a systematic plagiarist, it is hard for me to deny it. Every playwright of this period plagiarised and pilfered, more or less, from Calderón downwards: we must accept this as a fact—a fact as to which there was seldom any concealment. Just as Moreto was drawing towards the end of his career as dramatist, a most intrepid plagiarist arose in the person of Matos Fragoso, of whom I shall have a word to say presently. But Matos Fragoso was sly, and a bungler: Moreto was frank, and a master of the gentle art of conveyance. He pilfers in all directions; but he manipulates the stolen goods almost out of recognition, usually adding much to their value. And this implies the possession of remarkable talent. In literature, as in politics, if he can only contrive to succeed, a man is pardoned for proceedings which in other callings might lead to jail: and Moreto's success is triumphant. The germ of his play, *El lindo Don Diego,* is found in Guillén de Castro's *El Narciso de su opinión*; but for Castro's rough sketch Moreto substitutes a finished, final portrait of the insufferable, the fatuous snob who pays court to a countess, is as elated as a brewer when he marries her and fancies himself an aristocrat, but wakes up with a start to the reality of things on discovering that the supposed countess is the sharp little servant Beatriz who has seen through him all along, and has exhibited him in his true character as a born fool. Don Diego is always with us—in England now, as in Spain three centuries ago—and *El lindo Don Diego* might have been written yesterday.

Still better is *El desdén con el desdén,* a piece which shows to perfection Moreto's unparalleled tact in making a mosaic a beautiful thing. Diana, the young girl who knows no more of the world than of the moon, but who imagines men to be odious wretches from what she had read of them—

Diana is taken from Lope's *La Vengadora de las mugeres*; the behaviour of her various suitors is suggested by Lope's *De corsario á corsario*; the quick-witted maid is from Lope's *Los Milagros del desprecio*; the trick by which the Conde de Urgel traps Diana is borrowed from Lope's *La Hermosa fea.* Not one of the chief traits in *El desdén con el desdén* is original; but out of these fragments a play has been constructed far superior to the plays from which the component parts are derived. The plot never flags and is always plausible, the characters are full of life and interest, and the dialogue sparkles with mischievous gaiety. All this is Moreto's, and it is a victory of intellectual address. It clearly impressed Molière, who set out to do by Moreto what Moreto had done by others: the result is *La Princesse d'Élide,* one of Molière's worst failures. Gozzi renewed the attempt, and failed likewise in *La Principessa filosofa. El desdén con el desdén* outlives these imitations as well as others from skilful hands in England and in Sweden, and surely it deserves to live as an example of what marvellous deftness can do in contriving from scattered materials a charming and essentially original work of art.

Compared with Moreto, Juan Matos Fragoso is, as I have said, a bungler. In *A lo que obliga un agravio,* which is from Lope's *Los dos bandoleros,* he fails, though he has the collaboration of Sebastián de Villaviciosa. He fails by himself in *La Venganza en el despeño,* which is taken from Lope's *El Príncipe despeñado.* There is some reason to think that he tried to pass himself off as the author of Lope's *El Desprecio agradecido.* This play is given in the thirty-ninth volume of the *Escogidas* with Matos Fragoso's name attached to it, and, as Matos Fragoso edited this particular volume, it seems to follow that he lent himself to a mean form of fraud. However, there is no gainsaying his popularity, and

he may be read with real pleasure—as in *El Sabio en el rincón*, which is from Lope's *El Villano en su rincón*—when he hits on a good original, and gives us next to nothing of his own. A better dramatist, and a far more reputable man, was Antonio de Solís, who was born ten years after Calderón; but Solís's reputation really depends on his *Historia de la conquista de Méjico*, which appeared in 1684, two years before his death. He was naturally a prose-writer who took to the drama because it was the fashion. And that play-writing was a fashionable craze may be gathered from the fact that Spain produced over five hundred dramatists during the reigns of Philip IV. and Charles II. So the historians of dramatic literature tell us, but perhaps even they have not thought it necessary to read all this mass of plays with minute attention. Here and there a name floats down to us, not always flatteringly; Juan de Zabaleta, for instance, is remembered chiefly through Cáncer's epigram on his ugliness and on his failure:—

Al suceder la tragedia
del silbo, si se repara,
ver su comedia era cara,
ver su cara era comedia.

This is not the kind of immortality that any one desires, but this—or something not much better—is the only kind of immortality that most of the five hundred are likely to attain. The iniquity of oblivion blindly scattereth its poppy on the crowd, and the long line closes with Bancés Candamo, who died in 1704. He was the favourite court-dramatist as Calderón had been before him. To say that Bancés Candamo occupied the place once filled by Calderón is to show how greatly the Spanish theatre had degenerated. No doubt it must have perished in any case, for institutions

die as certainly as men. But its end was hastened by two most influential personages—one a man of genius, and the other a fribble—who had the welfare of the stage at heart. By reducing dramatic composition to a formula, Calderón arrested any possible development; by lavish expenditure on decorations, Philip IV. imposed his taste for spectacle upon the public. The public gets what it deserves: when the stage-carpenter comes in, the dramatist goes out. Compelled to write pieces which would suit the elaborate scenery provided at the Buen Retiro, Calderón was the first to suffer. He and Philip,[1] between them, dealt the Spanish drama its death-blow. It lingered on in senile decay for fifty years, and with Bancés Candamo it died. It was high time for it to be gone: for nothing is more lamentable than the progressive degradation of what has once been a great and living force.

[1] Philip IV. is usually described as a man of artistic tastes, but the evidence does not altogether support this view. For instance, on February 18, 1637, at a poetical improvisation in the Buen Retiro, Philip set Calderón and Vélez de Guevara the following subjects:—(1) 'Why is Jupiter always painted with a fair beard?' (2) 'Why are the waiting-women at Court called *mondongas*, though they do not sell *mondongo* (black-pudding)?' Time did not improve Philip. Some twenty years later, according to Barrionuevo, Philip arranged that women only should attend a certain performance at the theatre, and gave instructions that they should leave off their *guardainfantes* on this occasion. His idea was to be present with the Queen, and (from a spot where he could see without being observed) watch the effect when a hundred mice were suddenly let out of mice-traps in the *cazuela* and *patio*—'which, if it takes place, will be worth seeing, and a diversion for Their Majesties.' Owing (apparently) to remonstrances which reached him, Philip was compelled to abandon the project, but his intention gives the measure of his refinement. See an instructive article, entitled *Los Jardines del Buen Retiro*, by Sr. D. Rodrigo Amador de los Ríos in *La España Moderna* (January 1905); and the *Avisos de D. Jerónimo de Barrionuevo* (1654-1658) edited by Sr. D. Antonio Paz y Mélia (Madrid, 892-93), vol. ii., p. 308.

CHAPTER X

MODERN SPANISH NOVELISTS

If asked to indicate the most interesting development in Spanish literature during the last century, I should point—not to the drama and poetry of the Romantic movement, but—to the renaissance of fiction. As the passion for narrative 'springs eternal in the human breast,' Cervantes was sure to have a train of successors who would attempt to carry on his great tradition. But, in the history of art, a short, glorious summer is usually followed by a long, blighting winter. The eighteenth century was an age of barrenness in Spain, so far as concerns romance. No doubt Torres Villaroel's autobiography contains so much fiction that it may fairly be described as a picaresque novel, and you might easily be worse employed than in reading it. Nature intended the author to be a man of letters and a wit; poverty compelled him to become an incapable professor of mathematics, and a diffuse buffoon. With the single exception of Isla, no Spanish novelist of this time finds readers now, and Isla's main object is utilitarian. The amusement in *Fray Gerundio* is incidental, and art has a very secondary place. Spain appears to have remained unaffected by the great schools of novelists in England and France: instead of being influenced by these writers, she influenced them. After lending to Lesage, she lent to Marivaux; she lent also to Fielding and Sterne, not to mention Smollett; but she herself was living on her capital. She has no contem-

porary novelists to place beside Ramón de la Cruz, González del Castillo, and the younger Moratín, all of whom found expression for their talent in the dramatic form. Not till about the middle of the last century does any notable novelist come

From tawny Spain, lost in the world's debate.

While the War of Independence was in progress men were otherwise engaged than in novel-reading, and in Ferdinand VII.'s reign literature was apt to be a perilous trade. The banishment or flight of almost every Spaniard of liberal opinions or intellectual distinction had one result which might have been foreseen, if there had been a clear-sighted man in the reactionary party. It brought to an end the period of cut-and-dry classical domination. The exiles returned with new ideals in literature as well as in politics. There was a restless ferment of the libertarian, romantic spirit. Interest revived in the old national romantic drama which had fallen out of fashion, and had been known chiefly in recasts of a few stock pieces. Quaint signs of change are discernible in unexpected quarters. When the termagant Carlota, the Queen's sister, snatched a state-paper out of Calomarde's hands and boxed his ears soundly, the crafty minister put the affront aside by wittily quoting the title of one of Calderón's plays: '*Las manos blancas no ofenden.*' Fifteen years earlier he would probably have quoted from some wretched playwright like Comella. French books were still eagerly read, but they were not 'classical' works. Chateaubriand and Bernardin de Saint-Pierre became available in translations. Joaquín Telesforo de Trueba y Cosío, a *montañés* residing in London, came under the spell of Walter Scott, and had the courage to write two historical romances in English: I have read many

worse novels than *Gómez Arias* and *The Castilians,* and every day I see novels written in much worse English. The shadow of Scott was projected far and wide over Spain, and those who read *The Bride of Lammermoor* usually went on to read *Notre-Dame de Paris.* If Scott had never written historical novels, and if Ferdinand VII. had not made many excellent Spaniards feel that they were safer anywhere than in Spain, we should not have had Espronceda's *Sancho Saldaña ó El Castellano de Cuéllar,* nor Martínez de la Rosa's *Doña Isabel de Solís,* nor perhaps even Enrique Gil's much more engaging story, *El Señor de Bembibre,* which appeared in 1844. The first two are unsuccessful imitations of Scott, and *El Señor de Bembibre* is charged with reminiscences of *The Bride of Lammermoor.*

It is one of life's little ironies that the first writer of this period to give us a genuinely Spanish story was not a writer of pure Spanish origin. Fernán Caballero, as she chose to call herself,—and as it is most convenient to call her, for she was married thrice, and therefore used four different legal signatures, apart from her pseudonym,—was the daughter of Johann Nikolas Böhl von Faber, who settled in Spain and did useful journeyman's work in literature. Born and partly educated abroad, with a German father and a Spanish mother, it is not surprising that she had the gift of tongues, and that one or two of her early stories should have been originally written in French or in German. Yet nothing could be less French or German than *La Gaviota,* which appeared four years after *El Señor de Bembibre* in a Spanish version said (apparently on good authority) to be by Joaquín de Mora. But, though Mora may be responsible for the style, nobody has ever supposed that he was responsible for the matter, and any such theory would be absurd, considering that Fernán Caballero wrote many similar tales long

after Mora's death. In *La Gaviota,* in *La Familia de Albareda,* in the *Cuadros de costumbres,* and the rest—transcriptions of the simplest provincial customs, long since extirpated from the soil in which they seemed to be irradicably implanted—there is for us nowadays an historical interest; but there is nothing historical about them: they are records of personal observation. Fortunately for herself Fernán Caballero, who had no elaborate learning, did not attempt any reconstruction of the past, and was mostly content to note what she saw around her. In this sense she may be considered as a pioneer in realism. The title would probably not have pleased her, owing to the connotation of the word 'realism'; but nevertheless she belongs to the realistic school, and she expressly admits that she describes instead of inventing. To prevent any possible misapprehension, it should be said at once that her realism is gentle, peaceful and demure. She had some small pretensions of her own, felt a mistaken vocation to do good works among the heathen, and to be a trumpeter of orthodoxy. Each of us is convinced, of course, that orthodoxy is his doxy, and that heterodoxy is other people's doxy; but Fernán Caballero's insistence has a self-righteous note which may easily grow tiresome. There are some who find pleasure in her exhortations—especially amongst those who regard them as expositions of obsolete doctrine; but very few of us have reached this stage of cynicism.

These moralisings are the unessential and disfiguring element in Fernán Caballero's unconscious art. It is something to be able to tell a story with intelligence and point, and this she does constantly. And, besides the power of narration, she has the characteristic Spanish faculty of undimmed sight. When she limits herself to what she has actually seen (and, to be just, her expeditions afield are

rare), she is always alert, always attractive by virtue of her delicate, feminine perception. Many phases of life are unknown to her; from other phases she deliberately turns away; hence her picture is necessarily incomplete. But she sympathises with what she knows, and the figures on her narrow stage are rendered with dainty adroitness. There is no great variety in her tableau of that mild Human Comedy which, with its frugal joys and meek sorrows, it was her office to describe; but it has the note of sincerity. Her methods are as realistic as those used in later romances professing to be based on 'human documents'—a phrase now worn threadbare, but not yet invented when she began to write. She reverted by instinct to realism of the national type,—realism which was fully developed centuries before the French variety was dreamed of,—and it was in the realistic field that her successors won triumphs greater than her own.

Some ten or twelve years after the appearance of *La Gaviota*, Antonio de Trueba leapt into popularity with a succession of stories all of which might have been called—as one volume was called—*Cuentos de color de rosa.* In the past my inability to appreciate Trueba as he is appreciated in his native province of Vizcaya has brought me into trouble. Each of us has his limitations, and, fresh from reading Trueba once more, I stand before you impenitent, persuaded that, if he flickers up into infantile prettiness, he sputters out in insipid optimism. We cannot all be Biscayans, and must take the consequences. In the circumstances I do not propose to deal with Trueba,—who, like the rest of us, appears to have had a tolerably good conceit of himself,—nor to spend much time in discussing the more brilliant Pedro Antonio de Alarcón. Alarcón seems likely to be remembered better by *El Sombrero de*

tres picos—a lively expansion in prose of a well-known *romance*—than by any of his later books. All literatures have their disappointing personalities: men who at the outset seemed capable of doing anything, who insist on doing everything, and who end by doing next to nothing. Nobody who knows the meaning of words would say that the author of *El Sombrero de tres picos* did next to nothing, but much more was expected of him. Whether there was, or was not, any reasonable ground for these high hopes is another question. The 'Might-Have-Been' is always vanity. Save in such rare cases as that of Cervantes, who published the First Part of *Don Quixote* when he was fifty-eight (the age at which Alarcón died in 1891), imaginative writers have generally done their best work earlier in their careers. But, however this may be, our expectations were not fulfilled in Alarcón's case. A few short stories represent him to posterity: like M. Bourget, he 'found salvation,' lost much of his art, and, in his more elaborate novels, became tedious. Fortunately, about ten years before the publication of *El Sombrero de tres picos*, a new talent had revealed itself to those who had eyes to see; and, as always happens everywhere, these were not many.

While Trueba was writing the rose-coloured tales which endeared him to the general public, José María de Pereda was growing up to manhood in the north of Spain.[1] Though the verdict of the capital still counts for much, it would not be true nowadays to say that the rest of Spain accepts without question the dictation of Madrid in matters of literary taste and fashion; but it was true enough of all the provinces—with the possible exception of Cataluña—

[1] It may be worth noting that the date of Pereda's birth is wrongly given in all the books of reference, and he himself was mistaken on the point. He was born on February 6, 1833, and not—as he thought—on February 7, 1834.

in the late fifties and early sixties, when Pereda began to write for a Santander newspaper, *La Abeja montañesa*. Though he was over thirty, he had then no wide experience of life; he had been reared in a simple, old-fashioned circle where everybody stood fast in the ancient ways, and where there was no literary chatter. He seems to have had the usual traditional stock of knowledge flogged into him in the old familiar way by the irascible pedagogue whose portrait he has drawn not too kindly. From Santander Pereda went to Madrid, studied there a short while, joyfully returned home, and, till his health failed, scarcely ever left Polanco again, except during the short period when he was sent as a deputy to the Cortes. He hated the life of the capital, and remained till the end of his days an incorrigibly faithful *montañesuco*.

It is necessary to bear these circumstances in mind, for they help us to understand Pereda's attitude. Hostile critics never tired of charging him with provincialism, but 'provincialism' is not the right word. The man was a born aristocrat, with no enthusiasm for novelties in abstract speculation, no liking for political and social theories which involved a rupture with the past; but his mind was not irreceptive, and, if his outlook is circumscribed, what he does see is conveyed with a pitiless lucidity. This power of imparting a concentrated impression is noticeable in the *Escenas montañesas* which appeared in 1864 with an introductory notice by Trueba, then in the flush of success. It is an amusing spectacle, this of the lamb standing as sponsor to the lion; and, with a timorous bleat, the lamb disengages its responsibility as far as decency allows. The book was praised by Mesonero Romanos—to whom Pereda subsequently dedicated *Don Gonzalo González de la Gonzalera*; but with few exceptions outside Santander, where local

partiality rather than æsthetic taste led to a more favourable judgment, all Spain agreed with Trueba's implied view that Pereda's temperate realism was a morose caricature. The hastiest commonplaces of criticism are the most readily accepted, and Pereda was henceforth provided with a reputation which it took him about a dozen years to live down. He lived it down, but not by compromising with his censors. He remained unchanged in all but the mastery of his art which gradually increased till *Bocetos al temple* was recognised as a work of something like genius.

It is a striking volume, but the distinguishing traits of *Bocetos al temple* are precisely those which characterise *Escenas montañesas*. Pereda has developed in the sense that his touch is more confident, but his point of view is the same as before. Take, for example, *La Mujer del César*, the first story in the book: the moral simply is that it is not enough to be beyond reproach, but that one must also seem to be so. You may call this trite or old-fashioned in its simplicity, but it is not 'provincial.' What is true is that the atmosphere of *Bocetos al temple* is 'regional.' The writer is not so childish as to suppose that Madrid is peopled with demons, and the country hill-side with angels. Pereda had no larger an acquaintance with angels than you or I have, and his personages are pleasingly human in their blended strength and weakness; but he had convinced himself that the constant virtues of the antique world are hard to cultivate in overgrown centres of population, and that the best of men is likely to suffer from the contagion of city life. To this thesis he returned again and again: in *Pedro Sánchez*, in *El Sabor de la Tierruca*, in *Peñas arriba*, he argues his point with the pertinacity of conviction. There is nothing provincial in the thesis, and it is good for those of us who are condemned to live in fussy cities

to know that we, too, seem as narrow-minded as any fisherman or agricultural labourer. Can anything be more laughably provincial than the Cockney, or the *boulevardier*, who conceives that London, or New York, or Paris is the centre of the universe, that the inhabitants of these places are foremost in the files of time? Nobody is more provincial than an ordinary dweller in one of these large, straggling, squalid villages. Pereda is not afflicted with megalomania; he is not impressed by numbers; he does not 'think in continents.' He believes all this to be the bounce of degenerate vulgarians, and leaves us with a disquieting feeling that he may not be very far wrong.

He is not one of those who look forward to a new heaven and a new earth next week. If you expect to find in him the qualities which you find in Rousseau, or in any other wonder-child of the earthquake and the tempest, you will assuredly be disappointed. But, if we take him for what he is—a satirical observer of character, an artist whose instantaneous presentation of character and of the visible world has a singular relief and saliency—we shall be compelled to assign him a very high place among the realists of Spain. No one who has once met with the frivolous and vindictive Marquesa de Azulejo, with the foppish Vizconde del Cierzo, with the futile Condesa de la Rocaverde, or with Lucas Gómez, the purveyor of patchouli literature, can ever forget them. In this particular of making his secondary figures memorable, Pereda somewhat resembles Dickens, and both use—perhaps abuse—caricature as a weapon. But the element of caricature is more riotous in Dickens than in Pereda, and the acumen in Pereda is more contemptuous than in Dickens. Pereda is in Spanish literature what Narváez was in Spanish politics: he 'uses the stick, and hits hard.' Cervantes sees through and

through you, notes every silly foible, and yet loves you as though you were the most perfect of mortals, and he the dullest fellow in the world. Pereda has something of Cervantes's seriousness without his constant amenity. He is nearer to Quevedo's intolerant spirit. Exasperated by absurdity and pretence, he reverses the apostolic precept: so far from suffering fools gladly, he gladly makes fools suffer. The collection entitled *Tipos trashumantes* contains admirable examples of his dexterity in malicious portraiture —the political quack in *El Excelentísimo Señor* who, like the rest of us Spaniards (says Pereda dryly), is able to do anything and everything; the scrofulous barber in *Un Artista*, whose father was killed in the *opéra-comique* revolution of '54, who condescends to visit Santander professionally in the summer, and familiarly refers to Pérez Galdós by his Christian name; the hopeless booby in *Un Sabio*, who has addled his poor brain by drinking German philosophy badly corked by Sanz del Río, and who abandons the belief in which he was brought up for spiritualistic antics which enable him to commune with the departed souls of Confucius and Sancho Panza. These performances are models of cruel irony.

Bocetos al temple was the first of Pereda's books to attract the public, and it may be recommended to any one who wishes to judge the writer's talent in its first phase. Pereda did greater things afterwards, but nothing more characteristic. It was always a source of weakness to his art that he had a didactic intention—an itch to prove that he is right, and that his opponents are wrong, often criminally wrong—and this tendency became more pronounced in some of his later books. Such novels as *El Buey suelto*, and the still more admirable *De tal palo, tal astilla*, have an individual interest of their own, but we are never allowed

the privilege of forgetting that the one is a refutation of Balzac's *Petites misères de la vie conjugale*, and the other a refutation of Pérez Galdós's *Doña Perfecta*. To Pereda the problem seems perfectly simple. You have been discouraged from matrimony by Balzac, who has told you that the life of a married man is a canker of trials and disappointments —small, but so numerous that at last they amount to a tragedy, and so cumulative that the doomed creature feels himself a complete failure both as a husband and a father. Pereda seeks to encourage you by exhibiting the other side of the medal. Gedeón is a bachelor, a *buey suelto*: he has freedom, but it is the desolate freedom of the stray steer— or rather of the wild ass. He is worried to death by the nagging and quarrelling of his maid-servants; he gets rid of them, and is plundered by men-servants; he is miserable in a boarding-house, he is neglected in an hôtel; he has no family ties, is profoundly uncomfortable, goes from bad to worse, and finally expiates by marrying his mistress shortly before his death. The picture of well-to-do discomfort is powerful, but, as a refutation of Balzac, it is not convincing. So, again, in *De tal palo, tal astilla*. Fernando encounters the pious Águeda; his suit fails, he commits suicide, and she finds rest in religion, the only consoling agent. This is all far too simple. Are we to believe that every bachelor is a selfish dolt, or that only atheists commit suicide? Pereda, no doubt, lived to learn differently, but meanwhile his insistence on his own views had spoiled two works of art.

Something of this polemical strain runs through all his romances, and, after the fall of the republic and the restoration of the Bourbons, his conservatism may have contributed to make him popular in the late seventies and the early eighties. But we are twenty or thirty years removed from the passions of that period, and Pereda's work stands the

crucial test of time. He is not specially skilful in construction, and digresses into irrelevant episodes; but he can usually tell his tale forcibly, and, when he warms to it, with grim conciseness; he is seldom declamatory, is a master of diction untainted by gallicisms, and records with caustic humour every relevant detail in whatever passes before his eyes. He is the chronicler of a Spain, reactionary and picturesque, which is fast disappearing, and will soon have vanished altogether. If the generations of the future feel any curiosity as to a social system which has passed away, they will turn to Pereda for a description of it just before its dissolution. He paints it with the desperate force of one who feels that he is on the losing side. His interpretation may be—it very often is—imperfect and savagely unjust; but its vigour is imposing, and, if his world contains rather too many degraded types, it is also rich in noble figures like Don Román Pérez de la Llosía in *Don Gonzalo González de la Gonzalera*, and in profiles of humble illiterates who, in the eyes of their artistic creator, did more real service to their country than many far better known to fame.

One is tempted to dwell upon Pereda's achievement—first, because his novels are thronged with lifelike personages; and second, because they proved that Spain, though separated from the rest of Europe in sentiment and belief, was not intellectually dead. While Pereda was writing *Pedro Sánchez* and *Sotileza*, the world north of the Pyrenees was wrangling over naturalism in romance as though it were a new discovery. The critics of London and Paris were clearly unaware that naturalism had been practised for years past in Spain by novelists who thus revived an ancient national tradition. Pereda is still little read out of Spain, and, though attempts to translate him

have been made, he is perhaps too emphatically Spanish to bear the operation. Spaniards themselves need some aids to read him with comfort, and the glossary at the end of *Sotileza* has been a very present help to many of us in time of trouble. A writer who indulges in dialectical peculiarities or in technical expressions to such an extent may be presumed to have counted the cost: and the cost is that he remains comparatively unknown beyond his own frontier. He cannot be reproached with making an illegitimate bid for popularity, nor accused of defection from the cause of realism. Pereda was not indifferent to fame, but he did not go far to seek it. Like the Shunamite woman, he chose to dwell among his own people, to picture their existence passed in contented industry, to exalt their ideals, and to value their applause more than that of the outside world.

Fu vera gloria? Ai posteri
L'ardua sentenza.

A perfect contrast in every way was Juan Valera, whose ductile talent had concerned itself with many matters before it found an outlet in fiction. Pereda was stubbornly regional and fanatically orthodox: Valera was a cosmopolitan strayed out of Andalusia, a careless Gallio, observing with serene amusement the fussiness of mankind over to be, or not to be. Pereda tends to tragic or melodramatic pessimism: Valera is a bland and disinterested spectator, to whom life is a brilliant, diverting comedy. He had lived much, reflected long, and seen through most people and most things before committing himself to the delineation of character. To the end of his life he never learned the trick of construction, but he was a born master of style and had an unsurpassed power of ingratiation. He had scarcely come up from Córdoba when he became

'Juanito' to all his acquaintances in Madrid, and his personal charm accompanied him into literature. Macaulay says somewhere that if Southey wrote nonsense, he would still be read with pleasure. This is true also of Valera, who, unlike Southey, never borders on nonsense. Though he has no prejudices to embarrass him, he has a rare dramatic sympathy with every mental attitude, and this keen, intelligent comprehension lends to all his creative work a savour of universality which makes him—of all modern Spanish novelists—the most acceptable abroad. Yet, despite his sceptical cosmopolitanism, which is by no means Spanish, Valera is an authentic Spaniard of the best age in his fusion of urbanity and authoritative insight. This politely incredulous man of the world is profoundly interested in mysticism, and still more in its practical manifestations. Nothing human is alien to him, and nothing is too transcendental to escape criticism.

In this frame of mind, habitual with him, he sat down to write *Pepita Jiménez*. The story is the simplest imaginable. Pepita, a young widow, is on the point of marrying Don Pedro de Vargas, when she meets his son Luis, a young seminarist with exaggerated ideas of his own spiritual gifts. Luis is a complete clerical prig, who disdains such everyday work as preaching the gospel in his own country, and vapours about being martyred by pagans. As he has not a vestige of religious vocation, the end is easily foretold. At some cost to her own character Pepita pricks the bubble, and all the young man's aspirations melt into the air; he is made to perceive that his pretensions to sanctity are silly, marries the heroine who was to have been his stepmother, and subsides into a worthy, commonplace husband. In his *Religio Poetae* Patmore praises *Pepita Jiménez* as an example of 'that complete synthesis of gravity of matter and gaiety

of manner which is the glittering crown of art, and which, out of Spanish literature, is to be found only in Shakespeare, and even in him in a far less obvious degree.' Patmore has almost always something striking to say, and even his critical paradoxes are interesting. We have no means of knowing how far his Spanish studies went, but we may guess that his acquaintance with Spanish literature was perhaps not very wide, and not very deep. As regards Pepita Jiménez his verdict is conspicuously right: it is conspicuously wrong with respect to Spanish literature as a whole. The perfect blending of which he speaks is as rare in Spain as elsewhere. In Valera it is the result of deliberate artistic method; his gravity is a necessity of the situation; his gaiety is rooted in his sceptical politeness. In his critical work his politeness is decidedly overdone; he praises and lauds in terms which would seem excessive if applied to Dante or Milton. He knows the stuff of which most authors are made, presumes on their proverbial vanity, and flatters so violently that he oversteps the limits of good-breeding. Some of you may remember the dignified rebuke of these tactics by Sr. Cuervo. But in his novels Valera strikes no attitude of impertinent or sublime condescension. He analyses his characters with a subtle and admirably patient delicacy.

A hostile critic might perhaps urge that Valera's novels are too much alike; that Doña Luz is cast in the same mould as Pepita Jiménez, that Enrique is a double of Luis, and so forth. There is some truth in this. Valera does repeat the situations which interest him most, but so does every novelist; his treatment differs in each case, and is logically consistent with each character. There is more force in the objection that he overcharges his books with episodical arabesques which, though masterly *tours de force*, retard the development of the story. Now that we have them, we

should be sorry to lose the brilliant passages in which the quintessence of the great Spanish mystics is distilled; but it is plainly an error of judgment to assign them to Pepita. However, this objection applies less to *Doña Luz* than to *Pepita Jiménez*, and it applies not at all to *El Comendador Mendoza*—doubtless a transfigured piece of autobiography, both poignant and gracious in its evocation of a far-off passion. And in his shorter stories Valera often attains a magical effect of disquieting irony. Most authors write far too much, either from necessity or from vanity, and Valera, who was too acute to be vain, wasted his energies in too many directions and on too many subjects. Still he has improvised comparatively little in the shape of fiction, and, even in extreme old age, when the calamity of blindness had overtaken him, he surprised and enchanted his admirers with more than one arresting volume. Speaking broadly, the characteristics of the best Spanish art are force and truth, and in these respects Valera holds his own. Yet he is more complicated and elaborate than Spaniards are wont to be. His work is penetrated with subtleties and reticences; his force is scrupulously measured, and his truth is conveyed by implication and innuendo, never by emphasis nor crude insistency. Compared with his exquisite adjustment of word to thought, the methods of other writers seem coarse and brutal. You may refuse to recognise him as a great novelist, if you choose; but it is impossible to deny that he was a consummate literary artist.

At this point I should prefer to bring my review to a close. The authors of whom we have been speaking belong to history. So, too, does Leopoldo Alas, the author of *La Regenta*, an analytical novel which will be read long after his pungent criticisms are forgotten, though as a critic he did excellent work. It is a more delicate matter to judge con-

temporaries. You will not expect me to compile a list of names as arid and interminable as an auctioneer's catalogue. How many important novelists are there in France, or England, or Russia? Not more than two or three in each, and we shall be putting it fairly high if we assume that Spain has as many notable novelists as these three countries put together. Passing by a crowd of illustrious obscurities, we meet with Benito Pérez Galdós, and with innumerable examples of his diffuse talent. Copiousness has always been more highly esteemed in Spain than elsewhere, and in this particular Pérez Galdós should satisfy the exacting standard of his countrymen. But to some of us copiousness is no great recommendation. There are forty volumes in the series of *Episodios Nacionales*, and who knows how many more in the series of *Novelas Españolas Contemporáneas*? Frankly there is a distasteful air of commercialism in this huge and punctual production. It would seem as though in Spain, as in England, literature is in danger of becoming a business, and of ceasing to be an art. This is not the way in which masterpieces have been written hitherto; but masterpieces are rare, and there is no recipe for producing them.

If there had been, we may feel sure that Pérez Galdós would have hit upon it, for his acumen and perseverance are undoubted. Not one of the *Episodios Nacionales* is a great book, but also not one is wanting in great literary qualities—the faculty of historical reconstruction, the evaluation of the personal factor in great events, and the gift of picturesque detail. If the power of concentration were added to his profuse equipment, Pérez Galdós would be an admirable master. Even as it is, to any one who wishes to obtain—and in the most agreeable way—a just idea of the political and social evolution of Spain from the time of

Charles IV. to the time of the Republic, the *Episodios Nacionales* may be heartily commended. And, in these crowded pages, some figures stand out with remarkable saliency—as, for instance, the guerrilla priest in *Carlos VI. en la Rápita*, a volume which shows the author to be unwearied as he draws near the end of his long task, and as vivid as ever in historical narrative. He is, moreover, an astute observer of the present, far-seeing in *Fortunata y Jacinta* and humoristic in *El Doctor Centeno*. You perhaps remember the description of the cigar which Felipe smoked, the account of the banquet presided over by the solemn and amiable Don Florencio—Don Florencio with alarming eyebrows, so thick and dark that they looked like strips of black velvet. These peculiarities are hit off in Dickens's best manner, and yet with a certain neutral touch. Not that Pérez Galdós is habitually neutral: he is an old-fashioned Liberal with a thesis to prove—the admirable thesis that liberty is the best thing in the world. But this is not an obviously Spanish idea. The modernity of Pérez Galdós is exotic in Spain. He gives us an interesting view of Spanish society in all its aspects. Still,—let us never forget it,—the picture is painted not by a native, but by a colonial, hand. Born in the Canary Islands, Pérez Galdós lives in Spain, but is not of it; he dwells a little apart from the high road of its secular life. And this lends a peculiar value to his presentation; for what it loses in force, it gains in objectivity.

A foreign influence is unquestionably visible in the novels of both Armando Palacio Valdés and the Condesa Pardo Bazán —perhaps the most gifted authoress now before the public. The existence of this foreign element is denied by partisans, but it would not be disputed by the writers themselves. Was not the Condesa Pardo Bazán the standard-bearer of

French naturalism in Spain during the early nineties? We are apt to forget it, for what she then called 'the palpitating question' palpitates no more. Who can read the Condesa Pardo Bazán's *Madre Naturaleza* without being reminded of Zola, or Palacio Valdés's *La Hermana San Sulpicio* without being reminded of the Goncourts? Yet in *La Hermana San Sulpicio*, where Gloria is the very type of the sparkling Andalusian, and in the still more charming *Marta y María* which appeared some years earlier, there is a genuine original talent which fades out in *La Espuma* and *La Fe*. In these last two books Palacio Valdés does moderately well what half a dozen French novelists had done better. One vaguely feels that Palacio Valdés is losing his way, but he finds it again in the Spanish atmosphere of *Los Majos de Cádiz* where we see Andalusia once more through Asturian spectacles. As to the Condesa Pardo Bazán, she has unfortunately diffused her energies in all directions. No one can succeed in everything—as a poet, a romancer, an essayist, a critic, a lecturer, and a politician. Yet the Condesa Pardo Bazán is all this, and more. We would gladly exchange all her miscellaneous writings for another novel like *Los Pazos de Ulloa*, where the peasant is displayed in a light which must have pained Pereda. Is Galicia so different from the Mountain? But extremes meet at last. Dr. Máximo Juncal in *La Madre Naturaleza* thinks with Pereda that townsfolk are beyond salvation: only—and the difference is capital—he would leave nature to work her will without the restraints of traditional ethics. Clearly all women are not hampered by timidity and conservative instincts! But Palacio Valdés may be read for the constant, acrid keenness of his appreciation of character, and the Condesa Pardo Bazán for her vigorous portraiture of the Galician peasantry, and her art as a landscape painter.

We have the measure of what they can do, and they are at least as well known out of Spain as they deserve. A more enigmatic personality is Vicente Blasco Ibáñez. It is the charm of most modern Spanish novelists that they are intensely local. Pérez Galdós is an exception; but Valera is at his best in Andalusia, Pereda in Cantabria, Palacio Valdés in Asturias, and the Condesa Pardo Bazán in Galicia. Blasco Ibáñez is a Valencian; he knows the orchard of Spain as Mr. Hardy knows Dorsetshire, and he is most himself in the Valencian surroundings of *Flor de Mayo*, *La Barraca*, and *Cañas y barro*. But his allegiance is divided between literature and politics. Not content with propagating his ideas in the columns of his newspaper, *El Pueblo*, he propagates them under cover of fiction. He is the novelist of the social revolution, and the revolution is needed everywhere. The scene of *La Catedral* is laid in Toledo, the scene of *El Intruso* in Bilbao, and in *La Horda* we have the proletariate of Madrid in squalid truthfulness. Each of these is a *roman à thèse*, or, if you prefer it, an incitement to rebellion. Blasco Ibáñez is the apostle of combat; he knows the strength of the established system, and his revolutionary heroes die defeated by the organised forces of social and ecclesiastical conservatism. But he is fundamentally optimistic, convinced that the final victory of the revolution is assured if the struggle be maintained. We may not sympathise with his views, and may doubt whether they will prevail; but the gospel of constancy in labour needs preaching in Spain, and Blasco Ibáñez preaches it with impressive (and sometimes rather incorrect) eloquence. His latest story, *La Maja desnuda*, is more in the French manner, but it is no mere imitation; it is original in treatment, a record of gradual disillusion, a painful, cruel, true account of the intense wretchedness of a pair who once were lovers. Blasco Ibáñez

has given us three or four admirable novels, and he is still young enough to reconsider his theories, and to grow in strength and sanity.

He is not alone. In *Paradox, Rey,* and in *Los últimos románticos* Pío Baroja introduces a fresh and reckless note of social satire, while novelty of thought and style characterise Martínez Ruiz in *Las confesiones de un pequeño filósofo* and Valle-Inclán in *Flor de Santidad* and *Sonata de otoño.* These are the immediate hopes of the future. But prophecy is a vain thing: the future lies on the knees of the gods.

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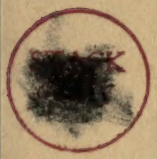

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